This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

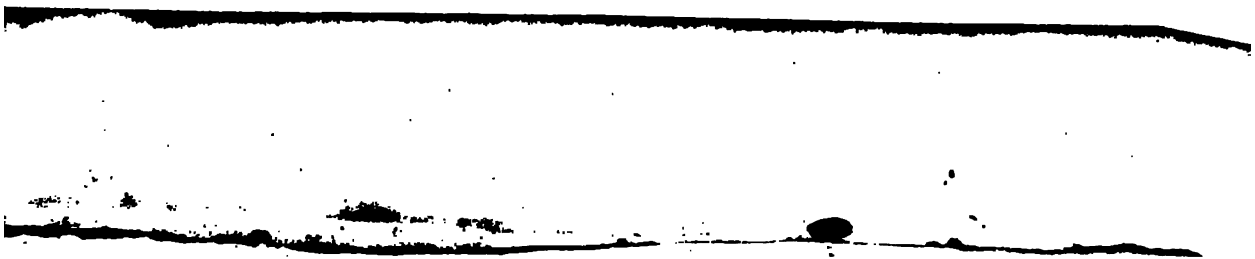
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

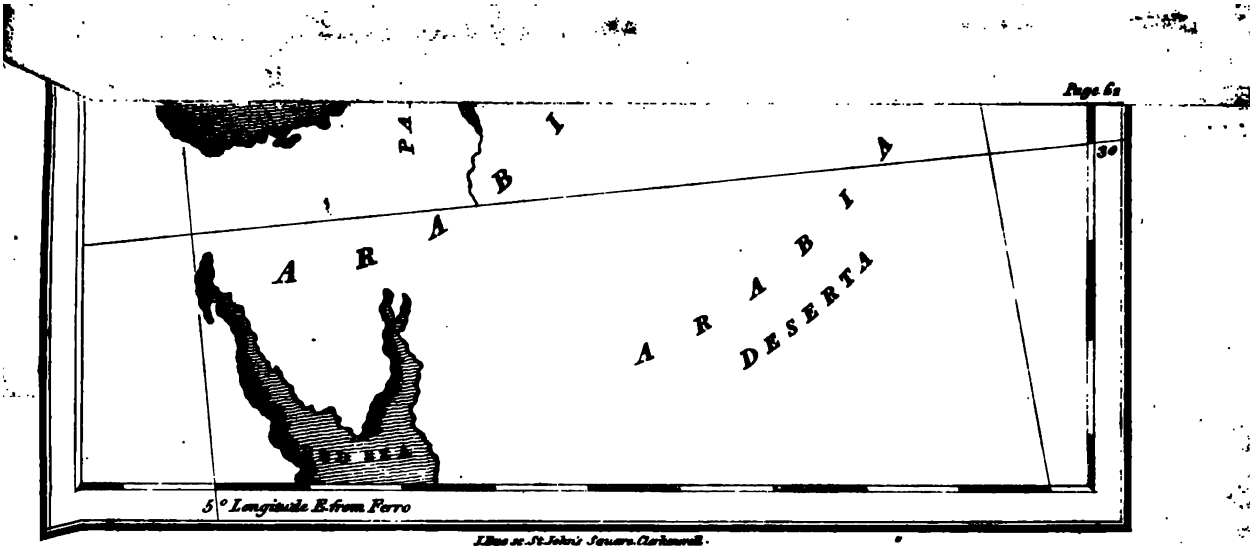
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

A 2227 f. 20





J. Bye sc. St. John's Square. Clerkenwell.

EIGHT

HISTORICAL TALES,

CURIOUS AND INSTRUCTIVE:

I. THE UNFORTUNATE DAMASCENES.

II. JETZER.

III. ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM.

IV. THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY.

V. MASANIELLO.

VI. THE CAMPDEN WONDER.

VII. THE MYSTERIOUS LETTERS.

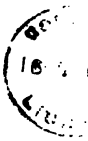
VIII. IVAN THE THIRD.

LONDON:

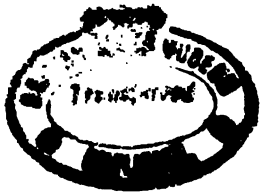
PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, NO. 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,

By H. Bryer, Bridewell Hospital, Bridge Street.

1801.



BRITISH MUSEUM



TO

THAT KIND RELATIVE,

WHO WATCHED OVER HIS HELPLESS YOUTH

WITH PATERNAL CARE;

TO WHOM HE, IN A GREAT DEGREE, OWES

WHATSOEVER ADVANTAGES

HE HAS DERIVED FROM EDUCATION;

THIS VOLUME

IS HUMBLY PRESENTED

BY THE AUTHOR,

AS A FEEBLE TESTIMONY

OF HIS GRATITUDE AND AFFECTION.

PREFATORY INVITATION.

NEITHER a title nor a preface should promise too much;—but it is to be presumed, that there is no arrogance in applying the epithets of "*curious and instructive*" to the following narratives. If fairy tales, if fabled romances can fascinate the youthful mind; there are facts recorded in authentic history, which are capable of communicating the same interest; and which may be read and remembered with higher advantage.—A few of these are offered to your perusal; be persuaded to turn awhile from the artful fictions of the novel-writer to the volume before you. It will at least afford you some rational entertainment, and upon the whole you may never have cause to repent, that you took it into your hands.

The collection here offered to you will appear formed in compliance with the taste, which now prevails.—If some of the events in these pages

should be tragical,—will that offend?—If some circumstances prove mysterious,—will that disgust? —If a narrative should contain a lesson or a warning.—will it upon this account displease you?— You are previously informed, that this book is not intended merely for the killing of your time. If it be not your own fault, you may derive from it profit as well as pleasure.

The author, wishing to impose upon the credulity of no reader, has subjoined the sources from which his tales are derived; and he trusts, that, in general, they will be found satisfactory. For the credit of the age, he cannot help indulging a hope, that he may not be universally blamed, for having, in some respects, attempted to render history the handmaid of virtue.

J. W.

TALES AND AUTHORITIES.

TALE I. . . . . Page 1

THE UNFORTUNATE DAMASCENES.

AUTHORITIES.—Oakley's Hist. of the Saracens, Vol. I.—Marigny's Hist. of the Arabians, Vol. I. from Alwakidi.—Gibbon's Decline and Fall, Chap. 51.

TALE II. . . . . Page 63

JETZER.

Burnet's Travels, p. 31.—Gregory's Hist. of the Christian Church, Vol. II. Century 16.—Hottinger's Hist. Helvet. Eccl. p. 334.—Hist. de la Reformation en Suisse.

TALE III. . . . . Page 85

ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM.

Hollinshed's Chronicle, folio edition, p. 1062.—Jacob's Hist. of Feversham, p. 197.

TALE IV. . . . . Page 131

THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY.

Robertson's Hist. of Scotland.

TALE V. . . . . Page 159

MASANIELLO.

AUTHORITIES. — Biograph. Dictionary. — Voyage Pitt. du Royaume de Naples, Tom I. p. 242.

TALE VI . . . . . Page 191

THE CAMPDEN WONDER.

A Narrative published in 1696.

TALE VII. . . . . Page 226

THE MYSTERIOUS LETTERS.

Smollet's Continuation of Hume's Hist. of England, Vol. IV. p. 414.

TALE VIII. . . . . Page 243

IVAN THE THIRD.

Le Clerc's Hist. de Russie Moderne, Tom II. — Coxe's Travels. — Life of Cath. II. Empress of Russia, Vol. I.

TALE I.

THE UNFORTUNATE DAMASCENES

THE conquests of the Saracens form a very interesting epoch in the history of mankind.—To a reflecting mind it affords no small pleasure, to observe from what contemptible origins the greatest events are permitted to spring.—At one time Mahomet was an outcast, obliged to flee for his life; but, within a few years from that period, the followers of this pretended prophet had subdued distant nations, and terrified empires with the fame of their invincible arms. Bold from the habits of their life, and the character of their religion, patient of hunger, thirst, and toil, they burst from their native deserts, and spread from Arabia, like an inundation, over a great part of the civilized world.—The following interesting circumstances took place during these iron times.

In the year 632 Mahomet expired; and his father-in-law Abubeker received the title of caliph *, and was raised to the supreme command. No sooner had he reduced some rebels that opposed his authority, than he dispatched this circular letter to the Arabian tribes. "In the name of the most merciful God, to the rest of the true believers. Health and happiness, and the mercy and blessing of God be upon you. I praise the most high God, and I pray for his prophet Mahomet. This is to acquaint you, that I intend to send the true believers into Syria, to take it out of the hands of the infidels. And I would have you know, that the fighting for religion is an act of obedience to God."

The caliph was resolved to execute the unlimited commission, that Mahomet had given to his followers, to fight till all people should embrace their religion. Syria was upon the borders of

* An Arabic word, signifying the successor.

Arabia; and the beauty and fertility of the land invited him to invade it. When the messengers that had been sent round returned, they communicated to him the tidings of martial ardour which they had kindled in every province, and intrepid bands of Saracens successively came up to Medina, and pitched their tents around the city: they panted for action, complained of the heat of the season, and the scarcity of provision, and accused with impatient murmurs the caliph's delays. As soon as their numbers were complete, Abubeker ascended the hill, reviewed the well-appointed army outstretched in the plain, and poured forth a fervent prayer for the success of the undertaking. The march began. In person, and on foot, he accompanied it during the first day; and when the blushing leaders attempted to dismount, the caliph removed their scruples by declaring, that those who rode, and those who walked, in the service of religion, were equally me-

ritorious. At parting he gave these instructions to the chief of the host: they breathe that spirit of warlike fanaticism, which advances to seize, yet affects to despise, the objects of earthly ambition. "Yezid," said the successor of the prophet, "avoid injustice and oppression; consult with your brethren, and study to preserve the love and confidence of your troops, as ever you would hope to prosper. In battle acquit yourselves like men, and never turn your backs to your enemies; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of the aged, or of women, and little children. Destroy no palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word." After this charge, Abubeker returned to Medina, and the ferocious tribes marched onward to the pleasant plains of Syria.

The discipline of the Arabian army

was severe. All profane or frivolous conversation, all dangerous recollection of ancient quarrels, were strictly prohibited among them; in the tumult of a camp, the exercises of religion were never omitted; and the intervals of action were employed in prayer, meditation, and the study of the Koran; whilst the abuse, or even the use, of wine was chastised by four-score strokes on the soles of the feet. The two leaders, who acquired the chief confidence of the army, were men of very opposite characters. Abu Obeidah possessed zeal and devotion, which were assuaged, without being abated, by a singular mildness and benevolence of temper. Caled, however, was remarkable for a superiour genius in all the emergencies of war; but he was of a more ferocious disposition. His valour upon former occasions had gained him the title of *the sword of God;* and he was certainly, in every respect, the foremost leader of the Saracens. Such was the spirit of the man, or rather of the

times, that Caled professed his readiness to serve under the banner of the faith, though it were in the hands of a child or an enemy. The other generals seem to have been shades of this ferocious original; and all the soldiers were animated by a violent enthusiasm; they fought like desperate fanatics, who had nothing to lose, and who firmly believed, that all who were slain in battle would receive the crown of martyrdom, and be translated to the joys of a sensual Paradise. Their expedition they dignified with the title of a holy war; and it were much to be wished, that the Christians themselves had not imitated them in this respect, when, some centuries after, they madly attempted to recover the Holy Land.—Such, however, was the general character of the people, that were to invade Syria, which at that time formed a part of the Grecian empire. [A. D. 633.]

Intelligence of these proceedings soon reached the ears of the emperor Heraclius at Constantinople. At first he des-

pised what he thought so insignificant a foe. But he was presently rouzed from his dream of security. The Arabs had defeated the troops, which he had sent to oppose them, and had made themselves masters of several towns, particularly Bosra. This place was no more than four days journey from Damascus, to which city they were continuing their victorious course. Damascus*, the capital of Syria, was a tempting object to these savage robbers of the deserts: In those days it was rich and flourishing; and in the present age, though fallen from it's former splendour, the beauty of it's situation astonishes the traveller.—Viewed from an eminence it appears seated in an earthly Paradise. A valley is seen, on each side bounded by distant mountains; in the midst the city thick set with minarets and mosques extends from North to South about two miles; on all sides, as far

* Now called Sham.

as the eye can reach, surrounded by delicious gardens, filled with fruit trees of various kinds. These are kept fresh and verdant by a river, that is divided and conducted through the whole, and is observed to glitter upon the border of every garden. Turrets and summer-houses are discovered peeping out from among the green boughs, and adding to the beauty of the scene.—Those who have beheld it speak of it with admiration. The city, they say, from the pleasure which it seems to promise, invites you to descend and enter; and yet you are reluctant to quit a spot, which presents so lovely a prospect to your view*.

Heraclius could not bear to think of losing Damascus, to which the successful Saracens were continuing their march. In haste he repaired to Antioch, and dispatched a body of five thousand men to the relief of the city, under the command of a general named Caloüs.—As he passed

* See Maundrell's Journey, p. 121.

through the country, the affrighted inhabitants came to inform him of the ravages of the enemy. Caloüs asked them the name of the general, and the number of his men: they told him that it was Caled, with no more than fifteen hundred horse. "No more?" said he, "be of good courage; upon my return you shall behold the head of Caled upon the point of my spear." When he arrived at Damascus, he arrogantly insisted upon having the sole command of the city. Izraïl, the former governor, was a man of approved bravery, and much beloved by the inhabitants, who were astonished at such a demand. Caloüs continued obstinate in his pretensions, and much time was unfortunately spent in faction and disputes, when the strictest bond of unity was needful; for the Saracens were expected every hour, and at last were seen at some distance from the walls, pitching their tents among the groves and gardens: forty thousand warlike savages

formed a terrific contrast to the peaceful beauties of the luxuriant plain.

The citizens suspended their quarrels upon the appearance of the common enemy, and sallied out with some detachments, to obstruct them in carrying on their approaches. A slight skirmish ensued, in which the adventurous valour of Derar was particularly distinguished. The hatred of the Christians, the love of spoil, and the contempt of danger, were the ruling passions of this audacious enthusiast; and the prospect of instant death could never shake his religious confidence, ruffle the calmness of his resolution, or even prevent the frank and martial pleasantry of his rough humour. In the most hopeless enterprises, he was bold, and prudent, and fortunate.—When both parties were ready to engage, Caled called aloud, "Now, Derar, acquit thyself like a man, and emulate thy father, and thy countrymen, who have fought in the cause of religion."—Immediately, Derar, well mounted, and followed by a

few horse, rushed forward to charge the enemy, and after slaying several, both horse and foot, oppressed by numbers retired into the ranks with applause. Abderrahman, the caliph's son received the same command, and gave signal proofs of his bravery. In that age a hostile defiance was frequently offered and accepted by the generals themselves, and Caled, advancing singly before the whole line, challenged any one of his adversaries, that dared to try the event of a single combat.

Caloüs, as he had arrogated to himself the supreme command, was compelled to accept the challenge. With reluctance he armed himself and went to meet Caled, taking an interpreter with him, for he wished to endeavour, to treat with the Saracen before they engaged. As they rode forward Caloüs trembled in his armour, and with many fair promises endeavoured to persuade the interpreter to assist him in the fight, but was mortified by a positive refusal. When they came

up with Caled, the interpreter thus addressed him after the manner of the Orientals; "A certain man had a flock of sheep, which he entrusted to the keeping of a careless shepherd, and the wild beasts devoured them. The master, enraged at his loss, turned the shepherd away, and in his stead took one more vigilant and brave, who killed the wild beast when he returned for his prey.—Beware, least this should prove to be your case: You Arabians were poor contemptible wanderers, hungry, naked, and barefoot; in your own land you lived upon barley-bread, and what you could squeeze out of dates; since you have fattened yourselves in this delightful country, you begin to rebel.—But now the emperor has sent to you an able and experienced soldier, and he has brought me with him to treat with you, out of pure compassion: therefore beware."—"Come," replied Caled, "tell me no more idle tales; as for what thou hast said of our country, it is true enough.

But the times are altered; and whereas you insolently reproach us with poverty, we shall shortly be masters of yourselves and all your possessions. Thou vauntest of this great man: why dost thou mention a great man to me, who have taken Bosra, and Hawran, and Palmyra? Let him be as great as he will; if he be the support of your kingdom, I am the support of our religion."—After this haughty answer he prepared himself to fight.

Although Caloüs did not understand the Saracen's words, yet the tone of his voice and the boldness of his countenance filled him with terrour. He bid the interpreter ask him to defer their combat till the next day, but Caled rushed between the Christian general and his army, and the interpreter turned his horse, and rode off full speed towards Damascus. The fight continued for some time, but at last the Saracen threw his antagonist to the ground; the whole Arabian army made the air resound with acclamations of joy, and cast a great

post before the eastern, and the milder Obeidah before the western gate. The Arabs were very watchful; but a messenger, let down from the wall, eluded the vigilance of their guard in the darkness of the night, and conveyed a letter to the emperor at Antioch, who, in the utmost concern, ordered his general Werdan, with a hundred thousand men, to march to the relief of the city. A rumour of this intended succour reached the besiegers, and Caled immediately called a council of war. His advice was, that they should go and engage the Grecian army, already upon the march. Obeidah was of a contrary opinion, that the city, already reduced to great distress, must surrender in a few days, and that it was much more prudent to press the siege: this opinion he urged with so many judicious reasons, that at length it prevailed.

In the mean time the army of the emperor made very slow advances; and the men of Damascus were greatly alarmed

by the appearance of a formidable enemy still before their walls. Their calamities increased daily, and famine was coming upon them with rapid strides. In this exigency they sent privately to Caled, offering him a thousand ounces of gold, and two hundred silken garments, upon condition that he would raise the siege: but their proposal was rejected with scorn, and they were informed, that they must either become tributaries or Mahometans, if they desired him to depart: should neither of these conditions please them, the matter must be left to the decision of the sword. Six long weeks were passed in continual anxiety, and that tormenting sensation occasioned by hope deferred; but at the expiration of this term they received the welcome intelligence, that the long expected succour was at hand. The Saracens in their camp heard the city resound with an unusual noise, great exclamations, and expressions of joy, and their scouts convinced them of the cause of it, by bringing intel-

ligence, that the Grecian army would soon reach Damascus. A council was again held, in which the generals adhered to their former opinions, Caled was inpatient to go and meet them, Obeidah would not consent, that the siege should be raised: an intermediate resolution was therefore adopted. They continued the blockade with a body of troops, and at the same time appointed some detachments of choice soldiers, to harass the enemy in their march.

Derar was at the head of them; Derar, than whom the Christians had not a more mortal foe. When they came in sight of the Grecians, the Saracens were intimidated at the appearance of so great a multitude. Derar encouraged them by his words, and the spirit of his example; for, advancing towards the enemy, he endeavoured to single out their general. His troops supported him, and the action began. With his own hand he slew the standard-bearer, and fought invincibly until his soldiers had carried off the

standard. At this juncture the son of Werdan arrived with a strong reinforcement, and the conflict became more fierce; but Derar having received a slight wound from the young man, and slain him in his turn, was surrounded on all sides, and taken prisoner. Caled received the intelligence, and hastened to the rescue of his friend; but his endeavours were in vain. He amazed the Christians with his fury: several times he broke into their squadrons, and particularly where he saw the most banners, in hopes of finding Derar; but his attempts were all fruitless: at last some deserters informed him, that Werdan had sent his friend to Emessa, under the escort of a hundred horse, intending to make a present of him to Heraclius at the end of the campaign. Caled instantly chose an equal number of horsemen, and commanded them at all events to release Derar, whilst he himself attacked and routed severally the divisions of the Grecian army; he had

shortly the satisfaction to see his rescued friend return, and they joined in the pursuit of the panic-struck Christians, who fled with the utmost precipitation.

Thus vanished the hopes of the elated Damascenes; and Caled from the slaughter and the spoil returned to his post before the walls. The city was now indeed under great affliction: but amidst the general consternation, that this news occasioned, their commanders used their utmost endeavours to rouse their courage for the defence of a place, which had nothing to depend upon, but their own vigilance and activity. Still they flattered themselves, that Heraclius would relieve them; but in the mean time they were forced day and night to be upon their guard, for fear of a surprise. They were not deceived in their expectations; the emperor, moved at their deplorable condition, and the defeat of his troops, collected a fresh body of troops at Aiznadin, and gave Werdan the command once more, with orders at any rate to

raise the siege. The Saracens on their part wrote to the caliph, to send them a strong reinforcement to Aiznadin, and instantly ordered the breaking up of the camp. Happy were the Damascenes, when they observed the besiegers quitting their gardens and groves; their courage, sunk by so many losses, now revived; and they resolved to make a sally upon the retiring enemy. The command was given to two brothers, officers of considerable reputation. Paul at the head of six thousand cavalry, and Peter commanding ten thousand infantry, marched out of the gates, and attacked the rear of the Mahometan army.

The rear guard is the station of peril in a retreat; Caled would have chosen it, but he modestly yielded to the wishes of Abu Obeidah. The Christians under Peter, seized, and caried off towards Damascus, many of the Arabian women, and much spoil, while Paul furiously attacked and routed Obeidah. When the intelligence was conveyed to Caled, "The will

of Heaven be done," said he calmly; "I would have taken the conduct of the rear, but he would not let me; now you see the consequence." In this hour of danger, the whole army flew to the assistance of their sinking companions, and immediately turned the tide of the battle. The Damascenes fled, and were pursued with slaughter; and Derar, whose sister was among the prisoners, was about to pierce the general with his lance, when Paul exclaimed, "Hold, hold; in sparing me, you save the lives of your wives and children, whom we are conducting to Damascus."—This argument prevailed, and his life was spared.—The Saracens at full speed continued the pursuit; but all this diligence would have proved ineffectual, if Peter, in making his retreat, had been guided by the same prudence that induced him to retire. His troops, fatigued with the heat of the day, halted on a very pleasant spot. With unbecoming negligence he suffered the tents to be pitched, and loitered as though

he had been altogether out of danger. Whilst they were thus carelessly refreshing themselves, the Arabian women, indignant at their captivity, resolved to defend themselves, and, when the Christians would have advanced, refused to march. Derar's sister instigated these warlike females, and, with a ferocity by no means becoming the softer sex, but common at that time amongst these tribes of the desert, they attacked and slew several of their guards. Their resistance was obstinate, and their conduct so determined, that the exasperated general had commanded his men, sword in hand, to attack these Amazons, who had armed themselves with tent-poles, or any weapon that they could seize; when on a sudden the noise of horses galloping was heard, and through a cloud of dust was seen a detachment of Arabians speedily advancing. Peter turned his head in the greatest alarm, and beheld two horsemen riding swiftly before the rest. One of them, Caled, was com-

pletely armed; the other, Derar, appeared a naked savage, armed with a lance, and mounted upon a horse without a saddle. Peter, wishing to make a merit of restoring to Derar his sister, accosted him with fair speeches, but was immediately slain, and a general rout ensued. The Christians, discomfited on all sides, were pursued by the victors to the gates of Damascus; and few of them could enter the city to relate the circumstances of their defeat.

The Saracens, highly delighted with the exploits of their females, retired to join Obeidah; and Derar carried back to the camp the bleeding head of Peter upon the point of his lance. At this sight Paul burst into tears; and being unwilling to renounce his religion, and by no means desirous of surviving a brother, whom he dearly loved, he bowed his neck to the executioner's sword, and his head was immediately severed from his body. The death of these generals, and the slaughter of so many chosen

men, was an irreparable loss to the Damascenes; but amidst their sorrow they received consolation in the hope, that the Grecian army would shortly put an effectual stop to the proceedings of these unwelcome barbarians, and restore peace to their afflicted city.

TALE I.

PART THE SECOND.

WERDAN was at hand with an immense host; nor was it long before both armies came in sight of each other. The Saracen reinforcements had arrived; but they were all astonished at the numbers of the Greeks, amounting to seventy thousand men. Those who had been in Persia, and had seen the armies of Chosroes, confessed that they never beheld a more formidable army. From the superiority of the enemy, Caled derived a fresh incentive of courage: "You see before you," said he, "the united force of the Greeks; you cannot hope to escape; but you may conquer Syria in a single day. The event depends on your discipline and patience." Werdan, on his side, represented to his soldiers, in forcible terms, the danger and disgrace of being beaten by such a foe.

The Arabian general wished to reconnoitre the Christian army; and Derar undertook this dangerous service. Werdan was surprised by the near approach of a fierce and naked warrior, and sent a party of horse to seize him. On this occasion he maintained a flying fight against them, and returned in safety to his applauding brethren. When his rashness was mildly censured by the general, he excused himself with the simplicity of a soldier. "Nay," said Derar, "I did not begin first; but they came out to take me, and I was afraid that God should see me turn my back; and indeed I fought in good earnest; and without doubt God assisted me against them; and had I not been apprehensive of disobeying your orders, I should not have come away as I did; and I perceive already that they will fall into our hands." In the presence of both armies, a venerable Greek advanced to Caled, and asked him, if he were the general.—"They consider me as such," replied he,

" so long as I continue to discharge the duties of our religion; otherwise I have no command over them." The old man endeavoured to dissuade him from bloodshed, and brought a liberal proposal of peace; for if the Saracens would depart, they should receive, each soldier, a turban, a robe, and a piece of gold; ten robes, and a hundred pieces, should be given to their leader; one hundred robes, and a thousand pieces, to the caliph.—Caled refused with a smile of indignation: " No;—no peace; turn Mahometans, pay tribute, or the sword must determine the controversy between us: we despise your pitiful offer, since we shall speedily be masters of your wealth, your families, and your persons." At this haughty answer the old man withdrew, and the battle began. The Armenian archers sorely galled the Arabians; but Caled restrained them from the assault; at last, the murmurs of the troops, and the importunity of Derar, prevailed with him to give the word of

command. The fight then became general, and many fell on both sides; but at the period when victory seemed about to declare for the Saracens, they were mortified to hear the trumpet sound a retreat.

This was the cause of so unexpected a proceeding. During the heat of the conflict, a Greek made his way to Caled; the latter rode up to him, and, with a stern look, presented his lance. "I am no soldier," said the Greek, "but have only a message to deliver to you; pray turn your lance away while I am talking with you." The general, immediately laying his lance across upon the pummel of his saddle, said resolutely, "Speak to the purpose then, and tell no lies."—"So I will," replied the messenger, "if you will promise me security for myself and family." Having obtained his request, he proceeded to deliver his message:—Werdan had sent him, to desire, that the battle for that day might cease; that he would meet him the next morning, at a certain place, within view

of both the armies, where they, the two generals alone, might treat, in order to find out some expedient to prevent the farther effusion of blood. Thus far the messenger executed his commission; but he also privately informed Caled, that an ambuscade of ten men were to rush out during the conference, and put him to death. "Well," said the general, "go and tell him that it shall be so." The retreat was accordingly sounded.

The Saracen officers, in the utmost surprise, crowded around Caled, to inquire the reason of this measure; and when he had told them, their astonishment was converted into joy. The fearless Derar undertook to thwart this treacherous design. When darkness covered the plain, he repaired to the place of ambush, accompanied by ten chosen soldiers. They halted at a little distance from the spot; and he, pulling off his cloaths, with his sword in his hand, crept softly along the ground. At last he heard some persons snore, and, approaching

a little nearer, saw, as plainly as the darkness would permit, ten men fast asleep, with their heads resting upon their arms. Then, returning to his troop, they drew near in silence; and each dispatching a drunken Christian, stripped him of his clothes, and put them on, impatiently awaiting the dawn of the day.

Before sunrise, Caled drew up his men in order of battle. At this sight Werdan sent a horseman, who rode up to the front of the Saracen army, and cried aloud, "Hearken, ye Arabians; is this fair? Have you forgotten the agreement, which you made with us yesterday?"—"What!" returned Caled, "charge us with breach of promise?"—"The general," answered the messenger, "expects, that you should adhere to your word, and meet him, to treat of peace."—"Tell him I am coming," said Caled. Presently Werdan rode to the appointed spot, upon a mule richly caparisoned, and adorned with gold chains and pre-

cious stones. Caled met him there; and both of them, alighting, sat down opposite to each other, the guilty, suspicious Greek still keeping his hand upon the hilt of his sword, for fear of a sudden assault. "Now," said the Saracen, "let us hear what you have to say; but be sure you deal fairly, and tell no lies; for it does not become men in eminent stations to practice deceit."—"My desire," said Werdan, "is, that you would inform us what you would have, and come to some reasonable terms, that we may have peace; whatsoever you desire of us, we will give you freely; for we know that you are a poor wretched people, coming from a barren country; therefore, if a small matter will satisfy you, we will give it you with pleasure."—"Alas! for thee, thou Christian dog," replied Caled, "we do not need your alms. What are your gifts to us, when all is ours?" Then rising hastily, "You know your option, the Koran, tribute, or the sword: no other terms shall we offer:

talk not to us of peace; we are a people that delight in war. You see I do not address you like a peace-maker; and if the meaning of your calling me hither were, that we might be alone, here we are in a place by ourselves, far enough from both armies; come and fight with me, if you dare." Immediately Werdan arose, but trusting to his treachery, made no haste to draw his sword. The other seized him, and shook him severely. Then he cried out, "Come out, come hither; this Arab has seized me." Forth rushed the ambuscade, nor was he at first undeceived; but when he beheld Derar brandishing his scymetar at him, his heart failed him, and he fell down at Caled's feet, in the most abject manner, begging his life. His head was struck off, and fixed upon a lance; and this to the Saracens was the signal of onset and of victory. Thousands of panic-struck Christians fell that day, the spoil was inestimable; many banners and crosses of gold and silver, precious stones,

silver and gold chains, and innumerable suits of the richest apparel and armour. The fugitives, retarding one another in their flight, were cruelly cut in pieces; and the slaughter lasted to the going down of the sun.

The sad tidings were carried to Damascus by the speed of grief and terrour. During the absence of the Saracens, they had laid in a fresh stock of ammunition and provision; but great numbers of the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages had fled with their most valuable effects, to take refuge in the city. Damascus contained a great multitude, but very few fighting men; however, they made preparations for a defence; their warlike engines were planted upon the ramparts, and their banners displayed. Day by day they expected the return of the conquerors of Aiznadin; and many a heart aked, when at last from their walls they beheld the arrival of the army, flushed with conquest, and enriched with spoil. Amrou led the van at the head of nine thousand horse: the bands of the

Saracens succeeded each other in formidable review; and the rear was closed by Caled in person, with the standard of the black eagle. To the activity of Derar he entrusted the commission of patrolling round the city with two thousand horse, of scouring the plain, and of intercepting all intelligence or succour. The rest of the Arabian chiefs were fixed in their respective stations before the seven gates of Damascus; and the siege was renewed with fresh vigour and confidence. The besieged plied their engines to great advantage, and interrupted the operations of the assailants; but they were not so successful in their sallies, and at last found themselves reduced to such extremities, that they began to think of capitulating without delay.

An assembly was held to deliberate upon this measure, and the majority were inclined to surrender. Thomas, a noble Greek, son-in-law to the emperor, lived at that time in Damascus, in a private station; he was a man of great courage

and an excellent soldier. Out of respect to his rank and abilities, the citizens unanimously agreed to ask his advice. When they came to his palace, he expressed his surprise, that the poor, naked, barefooted Arabs should cause them so much alarm; he represented to them, that these savages were in reality masters of no courage, but what arose from their fear; whereas the Damascenes were well appointed, and in every respect superiour, so that they had no reason to despair of the victory. The disheartened citizens replied, that the late victories of the Arabs had supplied them with arms; besides, being violent enthusiasts, they all fought with the desperation of madmen. After some conversation, Thomas offered himself to head the troops, if they would make another sally: this proposal had it's effect; and he agreed to go out with them the next morning.

The besieged kept watch the livelong night, and numberless lights placed in the turrets supplied the absence of the

sun. Thomas was ready by the dawn of day. At the principal gate, in the sight of both armies, a lofty crucifix was erected. The bishop, with his clergy, accompanied the march, and placed the New Testament before the representation of the cross of Christ. As Thomas went out at the gate, he laid his hand upon the sacred volume, and addressed a solemn prayer to the God of his fathers, that he would assist them in this defensive conflict, and not deliver them over to the fury of the oppressor.—The battle raged with incessant fury; and the dexterity of Thomas, an incomparable archer, was fatal to the boldest Saracens, and revived the hopes of despairing Damascus.

Among many others, he mortally wounded one Aban. The Saracen drew out the arrow, and bound up the wound with the folds of his turban; but, speedily languishing, was carried into the camp, where he expired. His wife, at once newly married and a widow, embraced her dying husband. "Happy," said she,

"happy art thou, my dear; thou art gone to thy Lord who first joined us together, and then parted us asunder. I will revenge thy death, and endeavour to the utmost of my power to come to the place where thou art, because I love thee." Without a groan, without a tear, she washed the corpse of her husband, and buried him with the usual rites. Then grasping the manly weapons, which in her native land she was accustomed to wield, the intrepid widow of Aban sought the place where his destroyer fought in the midst of the battle. The Christians were amazed at the sight of a woman completely armed, pressing forward to fight in the front rank of the Arabians. Her first arrow pierced the hand of the standard-bearer; and the standard falling to the ground, was eagerly seized, and carried off by the Saracens. Thomas, followed vigorously by his troops, rushed after it to regain it; and whilst he was fighting with the utmost bravery, the widow of Aban dis-

charged a second arrow, which wounded him in the eye, and compelled him to retire into the city. The fainting Christians no longer beheld their ensign or their leader: Yet the generous champion of Damascus refused to withdraw to his palace: his wound was dressed on the rampart, and he would have returned to the field, but for the urgent dissuasions of those around him; however, as he sat in the gate, observant of the battle, he had reason to be satisfied with the gallant behaviour of his soldiers; they fought on both sides till night obliged them to retreat.

At the request of Thomas, the Damascenes rested upon their arms, and cheerfully agreed to make a general sally. In the silence of midnight, the signal was given by a stroke on the great bell; the gates were thrown open, and each gate discharged an impetuous column on the sleeping camp of the Saracens. Caled was the first in arms; at the head of four hundred horse he flew to the post of dan-

ger, and the tears trickled down the cheeks of the veteran, as he uttered a fervent ejaculation; "O God, who never sleepest, look upon thy servants, and do not deliver them into the hands of their enemies." The valour and victory of Thomas were checked by the presence of Caled; as soon as the Saracens were acquainted with their peril, they recovered their ranks, and charged the assailants in the flank and rear. After the loss of thousands, the Christian general retreated with a sigh of despair, and the pursuit of the Saracens was checked by the military engines that played from the ramparts.

After a siege of seventy days, the patience, and provision of the Damascenes were exhausted, and the bravest of their chiefs submitted to the hard dictates of necessity. They resolved to surrender, but the unmerciful Caled refused to listen to their proposals; for he rather wished to take them by force, put them to the sword, and let his Saracens, have the plunder. Yet he, as the chief officer,

was the only one with whom they could treat safely and effectually. However, such fierceness giving them no room for hope, they resolved at any rate to confer with Abu Obeidah, whose mild virtues they had been taught to revere. Accordingly, at midnight, they sent a messenger that understood Arabic, out at that gate where Abu Obeidah was posted: he called out to the centinels, and desired safe conduct for some inhabitants of Damascus, who were coming to treat with their master. When this was told to the general he was very glad, and dispatched an officer to inform them, that they should be at liberty to go where they pleased. They asked him, whether he were one of the companions of Mahomet, that they might depend upon him? He told them that he was, but that circumstance made no difference; for if the meanest slave among them had given them security, the Saracens would have abided by it as a sacred covenant. Then one hundred chosen deputies of the clergy and people

went out into the camp, and were introduced to the tent of the venerable commander. He received and dismissed them with courtesy. They returned with a written agreement, on the faith of a companion of Mahomet, that all hostilities should cease; that the voluntary emigrants might depart in safety, with as much as they could carry away of their effects, and that the tributary subjects of the caliph should enjoy their lands and houses, with the use and possession of seven churches. On these terms, the most respectable hostages, and the gate nearest to his camp, were delivered into his hands: his soldiers imitated the moderation of their chief; and he enjoyed the submissive gratitude of a people whom he had rescued from destruction.

But the success of this treaty had relaxed the vigilance of the besieged; and about the same time the opposite quarter of the city was betrayed, and taken by assault. A party of a hundred Arabs had been introduced, and breaking the

bolts and the chains, had opened the eastern gate to a more inexorable foe, the sanguinary and rapacious Caled. "No quarter," he cried aloud; his trumpets sounded, and a torrent of Christian blood was poured down the streets of Damascus. When he reached the square where stood the church of St. Mary, he was astonished and provoked by the peaceful aspect of Abu Obeidah, and his companions; their swords were in the scabbard, and they were surrounded by a number of priests and citizens of each sex, and every age. Abu Obeidah saluted the general: "God," said he, "has delivered the city into my hands by way of surrender, and has saved the believers the trouble of fighting."—"And am I not," replied the indignant Caled, "am I not the lieutenant of the commander of the faithful? Have I not taken the city by storm?" Obeidah told him that he had given them an article in writing which they had now in their possession: "And why," said Caled, "did you agree

with them, without first acquainting me? Did not you know me? Did not you know that I am your general, and master of your counsels? Fall on; fall on; the unbelievers shall perish by the sword." The hungry and cruel Arabs would have obeyed the welcome command: and Damascus had been lost, if the benevolence of Abu Obeidah had not been supported by a decent and dignified firmness. "I did not think," said he coolly to Caled, "that when I had made an agreement, or designed to do any thing, you would ever have contradicted me, or attempted to make it void. But you shall not make it void; for I have given all these people my protection, and that in the name of God and his prophet, and all that were with me liked it, and approved it, and we are not accustomed to depart from our word." Then, seeing some of the Arabs slaying and making prisoners, he cried aloud, "My word is considered as nothing; the covenant which I make is broken;" and turning his horse, he threw

himself between the trembling citizens, and the most eager of the barbarians, adjuring them by the holy name of Mahomet, to respect his promise, to suspend their fury, and await the determination of their chiefs.

The Saracen officers retired into the church of St. Mary; and after a vehement debate, Caled submitted in some measure to the reason and authority of his colleague; who urged the sanctity of a covenant, the advantage, as well as the honour, which the Arabians would derive from the punctual performance of their word; and the obstinate resistance which, on the other hand, if they broke their faith, they must expect to encounter from the distrust and despair of the rest of the Syrian cities. It was agreed, that the sword should be sheathed, that the part of Damascus, which had surrendered to Abu Obeidah, should be immediately entitled to the benefit of his capitulation, and that the final decision should be referred to the justice and wisdom of the

caliph. A large majority of the people accepted the terms of tribute and toleration; and Damascus is still peopled by twenty thousand Christians.

But the valiant Thomas, with Herbis another officer, and the free-born patriots who had fought under his banner, embraced the alternative of poverty and exile. They begged protection of the Saracen general for the space of three days; after which they would be content to take their fortune. Caled reluctantly consented, but told them they should carry nothing with them out of the city, but provision. Abu Obeidah again interposed; he had already given them permission to carry off their effects. "Then," said Caled, "if they have that, they shall have no arms." Herbis answered, that they must have arms, without which it would be impossible for them to travel in safety. "Well," said Abu Obeidah, "let every one have something; he that has a lance shall have no sword, and he that takes a bow shall have

no lance." Thus did Caled endeavour to throw obstacles in the way of these poor fugitives, when on all sides nothing met the eye but objects of pity.

In the adjacent meadow, a mixed multitude was formed of nobles and priests, and soldiers and citizens. Crowding out at the gate was to be seen every age and degree, the beauteous female nursed in the lap of delicacy and ease, the weeping mother pressing to her bosom her tender infant, or leading her little ones that ran beside her; all these were forced to go through inhospitable deserts, pathless woods, and over craggy mountains, although unfit for fatigue, and uncertain of being provided even with the necessaries of life. They collected, with haste and terrour, their most precious moveables, abandoned, with loud lamentations or silent anguish, their dear native homes, and bade adieu to the pleasant banks of the Pharphar for ever. Oh! what heart of man could be unmoved at the sight of so much misery!

The hearts of the savage Saracens were steeled by stern enthusiasm, and frequent scenes of slaughter. Derar stood by the gate as they passed out; and when he saw them bend towards Antioch their weary way, he gnashed his teeth with indignation; he declared at the same time with an oath, that he valued not the plunder, but he was vexed to the heart in the thought that all these Christians should escape the edge of the sword. Equally untouched at the spectacle of their distress was the inflexible soul of Caled. He gave orders to his men to hold themselves and their horses in readiness for an expedition; and sternly affirmed, that after the promised respite of three days was expired, these unhappy fugitives might be pursued and treated as enemies.

However, in the mean time, a dispute arose concerning a magazine of corn which was found in Damascus. Caled and the citizens both preferred their claims to it, the former by right of con-

quest, the latter as their property, to which they had a right also by the capitulation. The generous Abu Obeidah espoused the cause of the citizens, and the dispute between the two generals was very severe, but terminated in their referring the matter to the caliph. This detained Caled, and diverted his attention; and four days and as many nights had now elapsed since the departure of the Damascenes. He had almost given up the thoughts of pursuing them, for it was to be presumed that by this time they would have gained a place of security; and doubtless these miserable exiles would soon have found an asylum, had it not been for a train of most unfortunate circumstances about to be related.

It has been already observed, that Derar, during the latter part of the siege, was placed at the head of two thousand horse, to ride round about the camp, lest they should be surprised, either by any succours from the emperor, or sallies from the town.—As these patroles one night

were going their rounds, they heard a horse neigh, which came out of one of the gates of the city. They stood still, and, suffering him to come up close to them, took his rider prisoner. Immediately after, there came another horseman out of the same gate; this person called the man who was taken prisoner by his name, and the Saracens bad him answer him, that he might come up, and they might take him also. But instead of complying with their demand, he exclaimed, in the Greek language, "The bird is taken." The person to whom he addressed himself, perfectly understood his meaning, and returned into the city. The Saracens, ignorant of what he had said, only knew that by this means they had lost another prisoner, and determined to kill him; but, changing their resolution, they conducted him into the presence of their general. "Who art thou?" said Caled.—"My name," replied he, "is Jonas, and I am a nobleman of Damascus. I was be-

trothed to a young lady, whom I loved as my life; when I intended to espouse her, her parents delayed our nuptials, and forbad me their house. I obtained a private interview with her, and we agreed to come out in the evening, and, bribing the guard at the gate, endeavour to make our escape. I ventured forth first, and, being seized by your men, to prevent her falling into your hands, cried out, "The bird is taken."—Warned by this exclamation, she returned with her two attendants: surely you cannot blame what I have done!" "Well," interrupted Caled, "what have you to say to the Mahometan religion? If you will embrace that, when we take the city, you shall have this maiden to wife; if otherwise, prepare to die."

The terrified Jonas instantly renounced Christianity; and forgot, at the same time, both his religion and his country; he entered into the service of the Mahometans, and was very active in the siege, in hopes that he might speedily regain

the object of his wishes at the taking of the city. As soon as the Arabians entered Damascus, his first care was to inquire where the young lady resided, and he was informed that she had retired into a convent; for, concluding that she had lost the object of all her happiness in this world, she resolved to spend the residue of her days in the contemplation of a better. To her great surprise, Jonas appeared before her; but no longer the same,—no longer a Christian. He expressed in the most lively terms the happiness that he experienced in her presence, told her the imminent hazard to which he had been exposed, and what a resolution he had taken to avoid the deadly blow, which would have parted them for ever. But the story of his apostacy wrought a sudden change in the mind of the lady: there the love of religion prevailed. She heard him with coldness, and left him with contempt: she declared, that she would never more listen to the conversation of one, who

had been so base as to abjure Christianity; and accordingly, when the miserable Damascenes obtained permission to leave the city, she departed, with many other females of distinction, to go to Antioch.

Jonas, who had contracted a friendship with most of the Mahometan chiefs, and especially with Caled, earnestly pressed that general to interpose his authority, that the lady might be detained: but Caled, deaf as he was to mercy, would not violate justice; and he refused to keep back by force any of the exiles of Damascus. When the apostate perceived this scheme to fail, he urged the Saracen commander to pursue the Christians, offering to be his guide. Caled was not very eager for the enterprise, because of the time that had already elapsed: But Jonas assured him, that the weary fugitives might yet be overtaken, that he had a perfect knowledge of all the country, and how to follow them the nearest way. Strange infatuation! He was re-

solved to regain this female, who loved him no longer; although he should at the same time betray into the hands of merciless and unrelenting Saracens thousands of his fellow citizens, men, women, and children, who had already laboured under the calamities of a consuming war.

At last, Caled yielded to his repeated importunity; and, at the head of four thousand horse, in the disguise of Christian Arabs, undertook the pursuit. Day and night they continued riding, and halted only for the moments of prayer *. Their guide had a perfect knowledge of the country; but for a long way the footsteps were plain and conspicuous. On a sudden they vanished; and Jonas comforted the Saracens with the assurance, that the caravan had turned aside into the mountains, and must speedily fall into their hands. He led them to traverse the ridges of the Liba-

* The Mahometans pray five times a day.

nus, where they endured hardships almost intolerable. The way was so extremely rough and uneven, that riding was attended with the greatest peril. The horses struck fire, beat off their shoes, and battered their hoofs upon these rugged rocks; the soldiers were compelled to alight; but they proceeded with difficulty and pain. All but the arduous apostate were heartily weary of the expedition, and murmurs began to arise. Soon, however, many footsteps appeared, and the sagacity of the guide discovered, that the Damascenes could not be far before them, because the dung of their horses was not yet dry. They halted to refresh themselves, and learned from a peasant of the country, that the emperor had sent orders to this colony of exiles, to pursue without delay the road of the sea-coast, and of Constantinople, instead of going to Antioch: for he was apprehensive, that the soldiers and people of this latter city might be discouraged by the sight and story of

their sufferings. The Saracens pressed onward, and those who saw them supposed them to be Christian Arabs. They were conducted through the territories of Gabala and Laodicea, at a cautious distance from the walls of the cities; the rain was incessant, the night was dark, a single mountain separated them from the Roman army; but with the dawn of day, the prospect again cleared, and they saw before them, in a pleasant valley, the tents of Damascus.

The poor fugitives were peculiarly unfortunate: had they been permitted to go to Antioch, they might have reached that city, before the Arabians could have overtaken them. The tempestuous weather, throughout the whole of their journey, but particularly the heavy rain of the preceding night, had proved a great disadvantage to them. But now the sky was more serene, and the sun shone with greater lustre, than it had done since they had left their native home. Glad of this opportunity, they sat down to rest

their weary limbs, and spread out their wet clothes to dry. A great number lay down to seek a temporary oblivion of their woes in slumber.

In this situation the Saracens found them. After a short interval of repose and prayer, for prayer was the prelude to murder with those fanatics, whose religion was to be propagated by the sword, Caled divided his cavalry into four squadrons. The first he committed to the savage Derar, and the last he reserved for himself. They successively rushed on the promiscuous multitude, insufficiently provided with arms, and already vanquished by sorrow and fatigue.—Thomas and Herbis bravely drew up their small army, and attempted an unavailing resistance, but they were both quickly slain, and a general massacre ensued. Humanity is shocked at the recital of such a scene; suffice it to say, that, except a few female captives, and one male, who was pardoned, and dismissed to bear the tidings to Constantinople,

the Arabs enjoyed the horrid satisfaction of believing, that no Christian of either sex escaped the edge of their scimetars. The gold and silver of Damascus was scattered over the camp, and a royal wardrobe of three hundred load of costly silks was carried off by this army of barbarians.—In the tumult of the battle, Jonas sought and found the object of his pursuit: but the resentment of the lady was inflamed by this last act of his perfidy; and when she saw herself his prisoner, and beheld the heart-rending spectacle around her, she plunged a dagger into her breast, and expired at his feet. Thunderstruck at the sight, he would have put an end to his own life, but was prevented by the timely arrival of some of the Mahometan chiefs. They calmed his grief, and presented him with a female captive, the daughter of Heraclius, and wife of Thomas; but she was speedily redeemed by her father.—Caled and his troops returned with the same secrecy and speed to Damascus: and the

wretched Jonas, having caused the ruin of thousands of his fellow-citizens, perished soon after in battle, fighting in the Saracen cause.

Here let us close this calamitous, eventful story, and cast a dispassionate eye over the whole. In the perusal of history our commendation is too frequently bestowed upon false models of excellence. Let us not be led away by the glare of any characters, to overlook the blemishes, which their apparent greatness cannot excuse. For instance; in the tale before us a great interest arises from the simplicity of the manners of the Saracens: they would put to the blush many a professor of a purer religion than Mahometanism. Yet they cannot become the objects of unqualified admiration. We must ever applaud the strict adherence to truth, which they appear to have exercised upon all occasions; but from the cruelty of these sanguinary enthusiasts we turn with horrour. Although Abu Obeidah shines with mild lustre

amid these scenes of darkness; still, when he is compared with the majority, he is but as a drop of honey in a cup of gall. Justice without mercy is indeed a monster.—Again; the case of Jonas at first sight seems pitiable; but few readers will be sorry, that this desperate apostate failed to reap the harvest of his treachery. When a principle of selfishness prevails in the breast of a man, it will often proceed to extinguish all the nobler feelings, and annihilate the sense of right and wrong. Jonas did not hesitate to urge the destruction of a helpless multitude for the accomplishment of his private designs: unhappily, this is not the only instance to be adduced from the history of mankind, in which the lusts of an individual have sacrificed a community. The character of Thomas is altogether a contrast to the former: in him we behold a picture of generous patriotism, and must lament, in his death, the fall of a brave, unfortunate man, struggling to save a sinking

city.—At the catastrophe a sentiment of regret will force it's way; but the conduct of the maiden is by no means to be admired. Suicide is so desperate a step, that, however it may be attempted to be palliated, it certainly can never be justified upon sound principles of reason or religion. At any rate, she lays claim to our compassion; and, perhaps, those persons should not presume to censure, who cannot pity.

This tale contains subjects for the poet and the painter, and has already been adopted by the tragic muse. They, who are acquainted with the prince of the Grecian poets, may trace a degree of resemblance between some of these characters, and those which Homer has represented before the walls of Troy. The manners of savages are in most countries nearly the same.

This is but a faint delineation of a holy war; than which, of all the conflicts in which nations are engaged, nothing can be more dreadful. Should it be

said, that the feeling mind can never derive any satisfaction from contemplating such scenes of blood and warfare; remember that this possesses an advantage, compensating the painful sensations which such descriptions may occasion. We may learn the blessings of peace from a knowledge of the woes of war; we may truly appreciate domestic quiet from a nearer survey of the sufferings of a besieged city.—Horrible in any shape is the scourge of war! O may the time quickly arrive, when it may be permitted to cease from among the children of men!

TALE II.

JETZER.

THE prodigious swarms of monks, that overspread Europe in the course of the sixteenth century, occasioned universal murmurs and complaints. Such, however, was the slumbering genius of the age, that they would have remained undisturbed, had they taken the smallest pains, to preserve any remains even of that external decency and religion, which had distinguished them in former times.

But the Benedictines, and other monkish fraternities, who were invested with the privilege of possessing certain lands and revenues, broke through all restraint, with shameless profligacy, they made the worst possible use of their opulence; and, forgetful of the gravity of their character, and of the laws of their order, rushed headlong into the open practice of every

vice. All the orders, indeed, were not indiscriminately born away by this torrent of licentiousness: the mendicants, and particularly those who followed the rules of St. Dominic and St. Francis, were more austere in their habits of life; yet even these lost their credit, although in a different manner: their rusticity, their superstitions, their ignorance and cruelty, alienated from them the minds of the people, and effectually diminished their reputation. They had the most barbarous aversion to the arts and sciences, and expressed an abhorrence of those eminent and learned men, who endeavoured to open the paths of science to the pursuits of studious youth, who recommended the culture of the mind, and in their writings and conversation attacked the barbarism of the age.

Among all the monastic orders, none enjoyed a higher degree of power and authority than the Dominican friars, whose credit was great, and whose influence was universal. They filled the

most eminent stations in the church, presided every where over the formidable tribunal of the inquisition, and had the cure of souls, with the function of confessors, in all the courts of Europe; a circumstance which, in those times of ignorance and superstition, manifestly tended to place the majority of the European princes in their power. Notwithstanding these advantages, the influence of the Dominicans began to decline; and several marks of perfidy, which appeared in the measures they employed to extend their authority, exposed them to the malignity of their enemies, and the public indignation.

Something, they found, must be adopted, to support the credit of their order; and they embraced an expedient of the most extraordinary nature. Of all the various frauds practised upon the credulity of the people, the page of history records none more singular than the celebrated imposition, which was performed at Bern in Swisserland, in the year 1509, by this impious fraternity. The stratagem was

employed in consequence of a rivalship between the Franciscans and Dominicans; and the particular occasion of their dispute was respecting the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. The former maintained, that she was without blemish of original sin: the latter asserted the contrary; and the contention was sharply supported on both sides. This anxiety for the overthrow of an unnecessary doctrine, which must of itself have fallen, appeared in the event to be altogether founded in ambition; but the opinions of the Franciscans, in an age of darknesss and superstition, could not fail to be popular; besides, an outward appearance of more severity, a ruder habit, stricter rules, and greater poverty,—all these imposing appearances, gave them such advantages in the eyes of the simple multitude, as were sufficient to counterbalance the honours of the Dominicans, who perceptibly lost ground.

This was the state of the rivalship about the beginning of the sixteenth century, when an unfortunate circumstance

rendered the breach still wider between these *Christian brethren.* A Dominican came into a church at Frankfort, while a Franciscan was preaching. No sooner did he see the Dominican, than, regardless of the place, of his office, or even of common decency, he discontinued his sermon, and burst out into violent exclamations. He praised God, that he was not of an order that prophaned the Virgin, or that poisoned princes in the sacrament. This was a crime of which a Dominican had been guilty with regard to the emperor, Henry the Seventh. The other, stung with this murderous reproach, stigmatized the Franciscan as a liar: a violent dispute and tumult arose, from which the Dominican with great difficulty escaped with his life.—The whole order, thus publicly insulted, *piously* meditated revenge.

At a chapter held at Vimpfen *, in the year 1504, they resolved to endeavour

* A town of Germany, seated on the Neckar.

to raise their sinking reputation, and humble their adversaries; and they determined to have recourse to fictitious visions and dreams, in which the people at that period reposed an unlimited confidence; for they *very religiously* observed among themselves, that, since the people were so much disposed to believe dreams and fables, they must dream on their side, and strive to delude them as well as others. Bern was chosen for the scene of their operations, because they knew the superstitious temper of the populace of that city, eager to swallow any imposition, and not disposed to make severe inquiries into extraordinary affairs. Four of them undertook to manage the design; and when they had completely organised their plan, they soon found a very proper instrument for the delusions they were contriving. At this juncture a person, named Jetzer, had taken their habit of a lay brother; they observed, that he was extremely simple, and much inclined to

austerities; and, having noticed his temper well, they thus proceeded to put their scheme into execution.

On the very night after he had taken the lay habit, one of the four Dominicans conveyed himself secretly into Jetzer's cell, and appeared to him in a tremendous form, surrounded with howling dogs, that seemed to be his tormentors, and apparently breathing fire from his mouth and nostrils, by the means of a box of combustibles which he held near his mouth. In this alarming form he approached Jetzer's bed, and told him a celebrated story, that they used to relate to all their friars, to intimidate them from laying aside their habit. He said, that he was the ghost of a Dominican, who had been killed at Paris, as a judgment of Heaven, for putting off his monastic habit; that he was condemned to purgatory for his crime; adding, at the same time, that, by his means, he might be rescued from his misery, which was beyond expression. This story, accom-

panied with fearful lamentations, alarmed the unfortunate Jetzer, and engaged him to promise, that he would perform all in his power to deliver the Dominican from his torment. As he lay trembling in his bed, the impostor still advancing towards him said, he knew that he was a great saint, and that his prayers and mortifications would prevail; but they must be very extraordinary: the whole monastery must consent for eight days to the discipline of the whip, and he must lie prostrate in the form of one crucified, in the chapel, whilst mass was publicly performed. These mortifications, the spectre said, would contribute to his deliverance; assuring Jetzer, that, if he complied with this, he would infallibly draw down upon himself the protection of the blessed Virgin, and all his sufferings in the cause should be most gloriously rewarded. He concluded by informing him, that he would appear to him again, accompanied by two other spirits; and then retired.

Morning no sooner arrived, than Jetzer gave an account of this apparition to the rest of the convent, who affected to express an extreme surprise. They all advised him to undergo the discipline which was enjoined, and each consented to bear his share of the task imposed. The deluded brother obeyed, and was admired as a saint by the multitude, that crowded about the convent; while the four friars, who managed the imposture, magnified in the most pompous manner the miracle of this apparition, in their sermons and in their discourse. Jetzer's confessor was in the secret, and from him they learned all the little circumstances of his life, and obtained access even to his private thoughts, which powerfully assisted them in the management of their scheme. This confessor gave to the poor victim a consecrated wafer, with a piece of wood pretended to be a relic of the true cross. These were to operate as charms in his favour, in case any other apparitions should approach him; since

they possessed the wonderful power of subjecting evil spirits to their control.

The following night the apparition was renewed, with the addition of two impostors, most horribly dressed like devils. Upon this occasion Jetzer was fully convinced of the virtue of his preservatives; for no sooner had he presented these awful relics to them, than it effectually checked their approach: his faith was also considerably augmented, when he heard a recital of all his words and thoughts, which had been communicated by the treacherous confessor. In this and some subsequent scenes the impostor conversed much with him upon the subject of the Dominican order, which, he said, was peculiarly dear to the blessed Virgin; he added, that she abhorred the Franciscans, whose doctrines were abominable to her; and that the town of Bern would be destroyed for harbouring such pests within her walls. In one of these apparitions, Jetzer imagined, that the voice of the spectre resembled that of the

prior of the convent, and he was not mistaken; but, not suspecting a fraud, he gave little attention to this circumstance. Some nights after this, the prior appeared as St. Barbara, all in glory, and told him that the Blessed Virgin, highly pleased with his charity, intended shortly to visit him. He immediately called the convent together, and his account was received with general joy, whilst the anxiety of Jetzer was wrought up to the highest pitch in expectation of the accomplishment of the promise. After tantalizing him for a short time, the longed for delusion was suffered to appear to him, clothed in the habits, which were employed to adorn the statue of the Virgin on the great festivals; the little images, which on those days were set on the altars, were made use of for angels, which being tied to a cord, that passed over his head, rose up and down, and danced round the pretended Virgin, to heighten the deception. The Virgin, thus equipped, addressed a long discourse

to the delighted Jetzer, in which, after commending him, and extolling the merit of his charity and discipline, she took occasion to deny the doctrine of the Franciscans, and confirmed that which the Dominicans maintained. As a miraculous proof of her presence she presented him with several extraordinary relics, and particularly, a host, or consecrated wafer, which, by some slight of hand, appeared to turn from white to red in a moment. After various visits, she told him, that she would add the most affecting and undoubted marks of her son's love, by imprinting on him the five wounds, that pierced Jesus on the cross, as she had done before to St. Lucia and St. Catharine. Jetzer seemed somewhat averse to receive a favour, that must be attended with so much suffering; but, without waiting for his consent, she forcibly seized his hand, and suddenly perforated it with a large nail.

The deluded fanatic awoke out of a fancied transport of enthusiasm into a

real agony. The wound was so large, that, when his hand was held up before the candle, the light was clearly visible through it. She seemed, however, to touch the lacerated part; and he thought that he smelt an ointment, which she applied to it, although his confessor soon persuaded him, that it was only in imagination. The next night, the pretended Virgin renewed her visit, and brought, as she said, some of the linen in which Christ had been buried, to soften the wound, possessing some real or imaginary virtue to allay the torment; she gave him also a soporific draught, and while he was fast asleep, the monks imprinted on his body the other four wounds of Christ in such a manner that he felt no pain.

But to accomplish this it is necessary to mention the expedient, to which these profligates had recourse; an expedient of so extraordinary and so detestable a nature, that the fact might scarcely appear credible, did it not rest upon unquestionable evidence, and seem some-

what corroborated by the practice of the age.—They called in magic to their aid. Strange, by the mummery of pretended diabolical arts to attempt to establish the credit of an order, who professed to be the servants of the God of purity and truth!—Such is the folly of ambition.—The reader may smile at the weakness, but he will doubtless feel a degree of horrour at the wickedness of these unprincipled miscreants, lost to all sense of reason and religion.—The subprior produced a book of charms before the rest of the society: but, he informed them, that before these could be effectual, they must solemnly renounce God, and he began by setting them the *pious* example: not content, however, with having proceeded thus far, he dedicated himself to the devil, in the hope of his succour, by a formal act prepared in writing, and signed with his own blood. It is true, that he did not oblige the rest to advance to this terrible extremity, but they all renounced God. Then, with impious

ceremonies, he proceeded to the composition of the draught, a secret which was not communicated at that time to the other friars *. Among the strange ingredients mingled upon this occasion were the hairs of the eyebrows of a child, some grains of incense and of consecrated salt, some quicksilver, the blood of an unbaptized infant, and some other articles of a stupefying and poisonous nature.

When Jetzer awaked from his lethargy, he found, to his unspeakable joy, these impressions on his body, and came at last to fancy himself a representative of Christ in the various parts of his passion. He was, in this state, exposed to the admiring multitude on the principal altar of the convent, to the great mortification of the Franciscans. The Dominicans

* These circumstances may, perhaps, call to the reader's mind a scene in Shakspeare's Macbeth; which, however ludicrous it may appear to some, is a faithful representation of those extraordinary mysteries.

gave him other draughts, which threw him into convulsions, and were followed by a voice conveyed through a pipe into the mouths of two images, one of Mary, and another of the child Jesus; the former of which had tears painted upon it's cheeks in a lively manner. The little Jesus asked his mother, by means of this voice, which was that of the prior, why she wept; and she answered, that her tears were owing to the impious manner, in which the Franciscans attributed to her the honour, that was due to him alone. The populace beheld, and believed the astonishing miracle.

The apparitions, false prodigies, and absurd stratagems of the Dominicans were repeated every night; and the matter was at length so grossly overacted, that, simple as Jetzer was, he at last discovered it, and resolved to quit the order. The reign of delusion was now at an end.—It was in vain, that they attempted to exhibit any more nocturnal visions; for he had almost killed the prior, who

appeared to him one night in the form of the Virgin with a crown on her head. Besides, he overheard the friars conversing among themselves upon the contrivance, and success of the imposture, so plainly, that he discovered the whole matter; and, as may be easily imagined, was immediately filled with all the horrour, which such a discovery was well calculated to inspire. The Dominicans, fearing to lose the fruits of their imposture, and apprehensive of being degraded in the public estimation, concluded, that the best method would be to confess the whole to Jetzer, and to engage him, by the most seducing promises, to prosecute the cheat. They artfully suggested the esteem, that would be attached to his character, if he continued to support the reputation, that he had already acquired: they hinted also, that he would become the chief person of their order. Jetzer was persuaded, or at least appeared to be so. But the Dominicans, suspecting that he was not entirely to be depended upon,

resolved to poison him; and he looked upon them with an equally suspicious eye.

One day they sent him a loaf prepared with some spices; but he was already upon his guard. He kept it for a day or two, and then, perceiving it to grow green, threw a piece of it to a wolf's whelps that were kept in the monastery, who died immediately after they had devoured it. Another attempt upon his life was alike unsuccessful, they poisoned the host, or consecrated wafer in the sacrament; but as he vomited it up soon after he had swallowed it, he escaped once more. Five several times they administered poison to him; but his constitution was so vigorous, that he was not destroyed by it. His malignant tormentors pressed him earnestly to renounce God; because they imagined, that their charms could have no effect upon him, until he had consented to this measure: but this proposal he firmly rejected. Then perceiving his inflexibility, they

treated him with unrelenting cruelty. They scourged him with an iron chain, and bound it so tightly around his body, that to avoid farther torment, he swore to them in a most imprecating manner, that he would never discover the secret, but would still carry on the imposture. After having thus deluded them in his turn, he found at last an opportunity of escaping from the convent, and throwing himself into the hands of the magistrates, made a full confession of the whole.

The four friars were seized and imprisoned, and an account of the affair was sent first to the bishop of Lausanne, and then to Rome; while the triumphant Franciscans were eager that it should undergo a complete examination. The bishops of Lausanne and of Lyons, with the provincial of the Dominicans, were appointed to form the process. The four friars first excepted to Jetzer's credit; but that was rejected: then being threatened with the rack, they put in a long plea against this measure, to which, not-

withstanding the remonstrances of the provincial, they were compelled to submit. Some endured the torture long; but at last they confessed the whole progress of the imposture. The mortification of the provincial was visible; for although Jetzer had disclosed the whole matter to him before, yet he refused to give any credit to his story: on the contrary, he charged him to be obedient to the friars, one of whom positively affirmed, that he was privy to the whole contrivance. Thus completely vindicated, Jetzer withdrew to Constance, where in a few days he died. It was believed by some, that he poisoned himself; while others, possibly with injustice, have charged his death upon his adversaries; since after all, the most probable supposition is, that his vigorous constitution, though not destroyed, was yet undermined by the sufferings it had undergone, which certainly might hasten, though they did not immediately effect, his dissolution.—For a whole year no farther inquiry was

made; but at the expiration of that time, a Spanish bishop arrived, authorized with full powers from Rome. After the most diligent scrutiny, the whole imposition being fully proved, the four friars were solemnly degraded from their priesthood, and burnt alive on the last day of May, in the year of our Lord 1509.

At the latter end of the seventeenth century, an English traveller* of undoubted veracity, who extracted the substance of the preceding narrative from the records of the city of Bern, beheld the memorials of this iniquitous proceeding. He was shown the cavity in the wall, through which the voice was conveyed to the image in the church, and saw the spot where the friars suffered the punishment due to their extraordinary crimes.

Unworthy followers of a divine master, whose life was purity, and from whose

* Gilbert Burnet, D.D., bishop of Sarum.

lips never dropped deceit or guile! When such was the spirit of priests, what idea could the ignorant multitude acquire of present duty, or of a world to come? If the teachers themselves could without scruple plunge into such enormities, to gain their ambitious ends, what must have been the condition of those, who followed such deluding guides? The general tone of morals must indeed have been lax and corrupt in the extreme: we cannot wonder at the darkness of such an age, or that a reformation soon succeeded. Have we not reason to be particularly thankful, that with us the reign of such delusion and superstition is at an end?—Let us take care to direct our walk by the light of the principles which we profess; or we shall only bring disgrace upon the purest of religions here, which will inevitably leave us without the shadow of an excuse hereafter.

TALE III.

ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM.

EXAMPLES have a twofold operation:—Either they incite to virtue, by exhibiting it's advantages and beauty, or they deter from vice, by exposing it's misery and deformity. It may be most gratifying to our feelings, to dwell upon what appears amiable in the human character; but more valuable experience may, perhaps, be acquired from looking upon the dark parts of the scene.

In the present case the sentiment of a brilliant writer* will not be misapplied.—"To trace the windings of vice, and delineate the disgusting features of villany, is an unpleasant task; and some people cannot bear to contemplate such a picture: it is fair, therefore, to warn readers of this turn of mind," not to peruse the

* Dr. Moore, in his Zeluco.

story of Arden of Feversham.—Let such proceed no farther.....
.....Those, however, who can consent to advance, may find this tale not altogether unworthy of their attention; for it displays events and characters of a singular nature, and paints in strong colouring the desperation of vice. The author, from whom it is principally taken, has stopped the general course of his history to introduce it; and upon this instructive occasion descends from national details to a narrative of private life.

When Edward the Sixth swayed the British sceptre, about the year 1550, there lived at Feversham in Kent a gentleman named Arden. He enjoyed abundantly the blessings of this life; he was prosperous and wealthy, and joined in marriage to one, whom he loved with the utmost sincerity, but who was entirely undeserving of his affection. In this respect he was most unfortunate.—Alice Arden appears to have possessed those acquired accomplishments, which constituted the

exteriour of the gentlewoman of those times; nature, too, had bestowed upon her those gifts, which please in every age—personal beauty in form and feature. Yet was there one excellence wanting, for the absence of which nothing can atone, since without it the most dazzling female qualities are empty as air—Chastity was not in the catalogue of her virtues. To tell the unwelcome truth in proper terms—for half the crimes in the world are rendered palatable by expressions too delicate for their enormity—Alice Arden was an adulteress!

The fault was on her side: Arden could by no means be accused of any deficiency of affection towards her; on the contrary, unhappily for him, his love had rendered him negligent and blind, where his duty might have called for severity and circumspection; for he alone was unable to discover, what was but too evident to all besides. In the following account the page shall not be sullied by the slightest indelicacy; yet it

shall not, on the other hand, in the least degree extenuate vice. The object, which had alienated the heart of this woman from her allegiance, was a person of the name of Mosby, lately an attendant upon sir Edward North, the father of Alice Arden: he was a man remarkable neither for person nor manners. Unlawful passion also blinds it's followers, and leads them to the edge of a precipice. Mosby, indolent and vicious, was easily persuaded to abuse the hospitality of Arden, at whose house he had been received as a friend, and a criminal attachment had now subsisted between the parties for the space of two years, in which time they had lost all sense of honour and of religion. They swore fidelity to each other for life; and, upon this occasion, in a church in London, had secretly profaned the holy sacrament by receiving it together as a seal of their guilty vows. At the altar, and in the presence of a God of purity, where formerly she had, by the most awful compact, devoted herself for

life to Arden;—at that sacred place she shuddered not to call that God of purity solemnly to witness her infidelity and enormous crimes.

Guilt is said to be progressive *; but after an action of this nature, what might not be expected from a mind so thoroughly depraved! She had not yet attained the summit of iniquity; another step remained to be ascended. It may be easily imagined, as it is actually true, that Arden was now become offensive to her sight: she detested him in her heart, and wished him out of existence. From desiring his death, she easily passed to the horrible gradation, the endeavouring to become his executioner, and soon proved the truth of that Roman maxim, that the adulteress is capable of poisoning her husband.

There dwelt at that time in Feversham a painter skilled in the preparation of poisons. From him, either by artifice

* Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.

for some feigned purpose, or by a bribe, she procured one of the most deadly nature, and speedy operation. Wretched case, where a man's foes are those of his own household!—One morning, when Arden purposed to ride to Canterbury, Alice prepared and brought him his breakfast, of which, as usual, milk was the chief ingredient. She had, however, mingled with it the fatal dose. But, probably owing to some degree of agitation and confusion, had forgotten a principal circumstance: she had put the poison to the milk, instead of pouring the milk upon the poison, according to the direction which she had received from the painter. Therefore it did not blend in a proper manner; and this errour saved for the present the life of her victim. Arden had no sooner swallowed a spoonful or two of the liquid, and cast his eyes upon it, than he discovered, that it was not as it should be, and found fault with the taste and colour. "Alice," said he, "what milk have you given me here?"

At this question she perceived, that she was in danger of being discovered, and angrily replying, "Nothing, I think, can please you," immediately spilt the whole mess, by tilting it over with her hand. Arden endured this without any farther observation;—many such gusts of passion he had, doubtless, experienced before;—and, mounting his horse, rode towards Canterbury. The poison presently began to affect him, and he was seized with a violent sickness upon the road: but he soon recovered, and, what may seem singular, certainly appears from his conduct throughout the whole of the affair, neither at this, nor any subsequent period, to have entertained the suspicion, that his wife was plotting his destruction.

It was not long before a second scheme was formed, in which the murderous task devolved upon others, who have not yet appeared upon the scene. An accomplice in this horrible design was a person of the name of

Green, living also at Feversham, and in the service of sir Anthony Ager. This man bore a deadly hate to Arden. Green claimed a right to some lands, originally belonging to the abbey of Feversham: the other disputed it with him; and at length prevailing, obtained from the crown a grant in his own favour, by which he wrested them altogether out of the hands of Green. In the course of this contention, threats, and even blows, had passed between them: but, as soon as the decision of the law had rendered Arden victorious, Green became his mortal foe. Under these circumstances, the adulteress found no great difficulty in prevailing with this man, to attempt or procure the murder of her husband; and the promise of an ample reward devoted him to her service, whenever an opportunity should occur of putting his design into execution.

Soon after this, it was necessary for Green to go up to London, in order to transact some business for his master, sir

Anthony Ager, who then resided there. Arden was also in London at this time. Now Green had property about his person to a considerable amount; and, as in those days it was particularly dangerous to travel alone upon such an occasion, he agreed with one Bradshaw, his neighbour, to accompany him as far as Gravesend, from which place he intended to proceed by water. Bradshaw was a person of exemplary honesty; and it will appear, that the precaution was by no means unnecessary.

They reached Rainham down in perfect safety; and as they were proceeding over it, towards Rochester, they observed three or four soldiers coming across the down, from Leedes. Two other persons also were in sight; but they were ascending the hill, from Rochester, and were of an extremely suspicious appearance.—Such sturdy vagabonds are often seen, when war is ended, boldly begging in the highways, to the alarm of solitary travellers; or

in retired spots, idly stretched upon the grass, sleeping under hedges, beneath the noon-day sun.—One was armed with a sword and buckler, and the other bore a great staff upon his shoulder.

When Bradshaw had espied them at a distance, he said to Green, "We are fortunate that some company from Leedes is about to join us upon the road; for here is coming up the hill against us as murderous a knave as can be found in all England. If it were not for these other persons, we should, perhaps, hardly escape without loss of our money and lives." A thought immediately darted across the mind of Green; he recollected Arden, and the service he was engaged to perform; and something, as he afterward confessed, suggested to him, that such a one would admirably suit his bloody purpose. Therefore he hastily inquired, "Which is he?"—"Yonder he is," said Bradshaw, "he that you see with the sword and buckler: his name is Black

Will."—"How do you know that?" said Green. "I knew him," replied the other, "at Boulogne, where we both served: he was a soldier, and I was sir Richard Cavendish's man. His character, as a cut-thoat, was infamous at that time; and he committed many robberies and dreadful murders upon travellers in that part of France." Little did Bradshaw suspect what was passing in the mind of his companion, who secretly coveted the acquaintance of such an abandoned monster.

By this time the company of soldiers joined them; and as they proceeded together, they met Black Will and his comrade. The soldiers knew and saluted him.—What a curious idea does it give us of the state of the police at that time, when villains of such notoriety were suffered to roam through the highways in broad day, and commit their depredations without being molested! But indeed the rebellion, quelled only a few months before, had most probably furnished every

road in the kingdom with a swarm of robbers.—But to return:—After mutual salutations, the soldiers asked Black Will, whither he was going?—The wretch was accustomed to swear almost at every sentence; and therefore, in his usual manner, which may be imagined (and was mentioned, only because it serves more strongly to stamp his character,) but shall not be related; he answered, "I neither know nor care, but set up my staff, and whichsoever way it falls, that way I go."—"If thou wilt go back again with us to Gravesend," said they, "we will give thee thy supper."—"I care not," replied he, "agreed; I am content; come along;" and so he returned with them towards Gravesend.

As the whole party were journeying onward, Black Will looked stedfastly at Bradshaw, and at last familiarly accosted him, "Fellow Bradshaw, how dost thou?" Bradshaw, not equally desirous of renewing acquaintance with a ruffian, of whom he was ashamed, affected sur-

prise; "Why do you know *me?*"—"Know *you?*" said the other, "yea, that I do. Did not we serve in Boulogne together?"—"Indeed, then you must pardon me," said Bradshaw; "for I have quite forgotten you." Then Green entered into conversation with Black Will, and said to him, before they parted, "When you have supped, come to the inn where I lodge, at such a sign, and I will treat you with sack and sugar."—"Thank you," said the ruffian, "never fear; I will come and take it, I warrant you;" and he came thither, according to his promise, at the appointed time. When their cheer was ended, and Black Will was about to depart, Green seized an opportunity of drawing him aside, and, out of the hearing of Bradshaw, held a conference with him concerning the murder of Arden. He proposed it to the villain, and promised him ten pounds as his reward. "Will you agree to kill him," said he in a low voice, "That I will," replied the other instantly, "if I can but

see him to know him."—" Well," continued Green, " to morrow I will show him thee in St. Paul's*;" and, breaking off the conversation, raised his voice, and bad him go home to his host's house. On that same night Green wrote a letter upon the subject to Alice Arden, in which were these memorable words:—" We have found a man for our purpose, for which we may thank my friend Bradshaw." This letter he delivered into the hands of Bradshaw, who sat an unsuspecting witness of this diabolical proceeding; and ignorant of it's contents, or the effect that it was hereafter to produce, delivered it to Alice Arden, the next morning, upon his return home.

From Gravesend, Green and Black Will went up to London, at the flowing of the tide; and, faithful to the promise which he had made upon certain intelligence, Green pointed out Arden walking in St. Paul's. The murderer hastily

* See Appendix, No. I.

inquired, "Who is he that follows him?"—"One of his men," replied the other.—"I will kill them both," added he with an oath.—"Nay," said Green, "do not so; for he is concerned with us in the plot."—"I care not for that," said the blood-thirsty wretch, "I will kill them both."—"Nay," replied his companion, "softly; do not at any rate act thus."—However, Black Will would most assuredly at that time have killed Arden openly in St. Paul's Churchyard, if he could have assaulted him with any degree of safety. But he was surrounded by such a crowd, and so many gentlemen accompanied him to dinner, that he found it impossible to execute his purpose.

It has been mentioned, that one of Arden's servants, who then attended him in London, was engaged in the conspiracy; and the cause of this remains to be explained. Michael Saunderson—this was the name of the man—had long been privy to the shameless conduct of

Alice Arden, but was engaged to preserve the secret, and assist in the design, by the hopes of marrying a relation of Mosby, to whom he paid his court. The next time Green met Michael, he unwarily described to him this violent conduct, and related these furious expressions of Black Will; which so alarmed the unfaithful servant, that he suspected the ruffian ever after, and was continually apprehensive, lest he should be slain together with his master.

Little confidence is to be expected among murderers; and this distrust impeded once more the execution of the scheme. Michael and Green had agreed that Black Will should come in the night to the house where Arden resided in London; and all the doors were to be left unfastened, that without any impediment he might have immediate access to the bedchamber of Arden. When this gentleman had retired to rest, Michael, as he had appointed, left all the doors open. What was, however, rather sin-

gular, his master, after he was in bed, called to him, and inquired in a particular manner, if he had shut fast the doors. He treacherously answered in the affirmative, and went also to bed. But he could not rest; the thoughts of his approaching danger harassed his imagination; he fancied that he heard the murderer approaching to kill him as well as Arden. To put an end to this agitation he arose, and, through the dark creeping to the doors, shut them, and made them fast with the bolts.

At dead of night Black Will repaired to the spot, and finding the doors shut, departed in disappointment and rage. The next day he came to Green, with a countenance and words expressive of the utmost fury: he complained that he had been deceived; and with many dreadful oaths and frowns, threatened to kill Michael first, wheresoever he should chance to meet him.—"No," said Green, in a pacifying tone, "do not act in this manner. First let us

know the cause of his shutting the doors, before we proceed any farther." Then he went in search of Michael, and asked him why he did not leave open the doors, according to his promise. "I will tell you the reason," said Michael; "a most curious affair happened last night: my master did then a thing which I never knew him to do before. After I was in bed, he arose, and fastened the doors; and in the morning scolded me for leaving them unshut." With this plausible falsehood Green was satisfied, and the wrath of Black Will appeased.

A fourth attempt proved equally unsuccessful. Arden was now about to return to Feversham; and Green, receiving intelligence of his design, posted Black Will to way-lay him upon Rainham down. When Arden and his servant arrived at Rochester, the latter, knowing what was shortly about to occur, and still haunted with cowardly alarms for his personal safety, purposely lamed

his horse, that he might protract the time, and loiter behind. As soon as they set out again, his master observed it, and inquired why his horse was so lame. He pretended that he did not know. "Well," said his master, "when you come to the smith's shop, here before us, between Rochester and the foot of the hill opposite to Chatham, let his shoe be removed, and search him, and then follow me. Gladly he obeyed, while the other at a gentle pace rode on, as Michael thought, to certain death: but before he came to the place where Black Will lay in wait for him, several gentlemen of his acquaintance overtook him, and accompained him over Rainham down; they knew not, that at this moment they composed his body-guard; but the impatient murderer, to his great mortification, saw him pass by the place of ambush, too well attended to admit of any attempt against his life.

Providence seemed wonderfully to interpose in his behalf; but this, instead

of deterring the conspirators, appears rather to have increased their vigilance. When Arden had returned to Feversham, he sent his servant upon some business to sir Thomas Cheney*, lord warden of the cinque ports, who resided at Shorland in the Isle of Shepey; and this nobleman gave him a letter to be delivered to his master. When Michael came back, Alice Arden took it into her possession, and ordered him to tell his master, that sir Thomas Cheney had entrusted a letter to his care, but that he had unfortunately lost it on the way; recommending Arden at the same time to go himself to sir Thomas the next morning, because the lost letter might contain matter of great importance. The servant implicitly followed her instructions; and his deluded master, falling into the snare, resolved to go to Shorland without delay, and ordered Michael to accompany him at an early hour in the

* See the Appendix, No. II.

morning. In the mean while the murderers were at hand. Black Will and his comrade already mentioned were lodged by Green in a barn belonging to sir Anthony Ager, at Preston, near Feversham: thither Alice Arden went in person, to direct them in the scheme, and she took care that they should be well supplied with meat and drink, irresistible modes of attaching the miscreants to her service. No sooner had Arden determined to go to Shorland, than Black Will received his instructions. In the way between Feversham and the ferry, which passes over to the Isle of Shepey, there was a certain enclosure overgrown with broom. They judged that this spot, so well adapted for concealment, and the early hour, would ensure their success; and Black Will was ordered to secrete himself in the broom by dawn of day.

Arden too was stirring betimes, and set out for Shorland, attended by his servant. When they had almost arrived at the enclosure, Michael, haunted by a troubled

concience, and still fearing lest he should be murdered together with his master, feigned on a sudden that he had lost his purse.—"Why, thou silly knave," said his master, "couldst thou not take better care of thy purse than to lose it? What was in it?"—"Three pounds," he replied.—"Why then, go thy way back again, like a careless fellow as thou art, and seek it; at this early hour, when few are abroad, thou mayest be sure to find it, and then come and overtake me at the ferry."—Arden passed through the field of broom without the least molestation, and reached Shorland in safety, whence he returned unhurt in the evening. Whether some of the lord warden's men acompained him back to Feversham, or that he avoided the broomy enclosure through some apprehension, owing to the late hour, certain it is, that the conspirators beheld him in the evening with surprise. The fact was this, Black Will, sallying forth early in the morning, missed his way; and though he

afterward lay the whole day among the broom, yet no second opportunity occurred.

But now, the annual fair of St. Valentine being at hand, the conspirators thought, that they could easily accomplish their diabolical intentions during the confusion attendant upon such an occasion. Mosby entertained a design of insulting Arden during the fair, that he might fight with him, and shelter his deliberate assassination under the appearance of a quarrel and a single combat; for, with a strange barbarous semblance of honour, he declared, that he could not find it in his heart to murder a gentleman in the manner that Alice Arden desired.—Accordingly, he endeavoured to provoke the injured man to fight with him; but in this he failed. —Arden prudently refused upon this occasion, as he had already done many times before. The conspirators, baffled in every attempt, assembled in the evening of the same day, in a house belonging to the sister of Mosby, to whom Mi-

chael was to be espoused. Thither came Green and the two ruffians, Mosby and Alice Arden, with Michael and a female servant in the interest of this abandoned woman, and there they consulted together upon this work of blood.

Mosby, perhaps, somewhat less abandoned than the rest, or, it may be, relenting, would not consent to the scheme of murder which was proposed. Adhering to his former sentiments, he declared that it was cowardly, and left the house in a rage. But he had not been gone many minutes, before Alice Arden dispatched a messenger after him, requesting him, as he prized her love, to return and lend his assistance in the accomplishment of the matter that was in hand. Mosby returned; and as soon as he entered the room, she fell down upon her knees before him, and besought him most importunately to go through with the affair: if he loved her, he could not refuse her:— besides, as she had often told him before, he need not be under any apprehension

of a discovery;—for there were none that would care for the death of this man, nor make any great inquiry after those who should destroy him.—How horrible is this! Could no remorse touch her bosom? The adulteress as earnestly begs for the death of her husband, as, if she had been faithful, she would have entreated for his life. A female suing upon her knees for the murder of an innocent person, to whom she is bound by the nearest and most sacred relation, is indeed a monster of iniquity.—Mark well the danger of once deserting the path of virtue.

At length her importunity prevailed over the reluctance of Mosby; and the plan, already concerted, was put into execution in the following manner.—Black Will was immediately introduced into Arden's house, and concealed in a closet at the end of his parlour. But previous to this, they had sent out of the house all the servants, except those who were privy to this dreadful secret. It was now between the hours of six and seven in

the evening, and Mosby went in his silk nightgown, and placed himself at the door. While he stood there upon the watch, Arden came up, just returning from the house of a neighbour, and, in the true spirit of Christian forgiveness, addressed in a friendly manner the person, who upon some slight pretence had sought to quarrel and to fight with him in the morning. "Mosby, is it supper time?"—"I think not," replied the other, "it is not yet ready."—"Then let us go in the mean while," said Arden, "and play a game at the tables*."—The traitor followed him in, and they went immediately into the parlour. As they passed through the hall, they saw Alice Arden pacing to and fro in sullen anxiety; and though her husband, as he walked by her, spoke to her in an affectionate manner, she scarcely vouchsafed to return him any answer. When their victim was thus ensnared, one of them ran to chain the

* Either chess or draughts.

wicket-door of the entry, and every thing was now finally arranged.

Arrived in the parlour, Mosby sat down upon the bench, with his eyes towards the place where Black Will was secreted. By this means Arden's back was turned towards the closet; and Michael stood behind his master with a candle in his hand, which he held, so as completely to cast a shade upon the ruffian, that he might steal forth from his ambush unperceived. They took the tables and began to play; whilst Arden's life was the stake of the game: in the course of it Mosby soon took occasion to use an expression, which they had agreed should be the signal of onset. After his antagonist had made a certain move, he exclaimed, "Now I may take you, sir, if I please."—"*Take me?*" said Arden; "how?—which way will you take me?" —The mystery was quickly explained; Black Will rushed forth, and cast a towel about his neck to strangle him; Mosby too, ... But why should we par-

ticularly recount the circumstances of so barbarous an action?—He resisted; but they prevailed, and he was slain. The hireling murderer dragged his corpse into an adjoining counting-house, where he audaciously stripped him of his rings and purse, as though he had robbed him upon the road; and then demanded his reward. Alice Arden paid him the ten pounds, Green furnished him with a horse, and he immediately rode away.—How shall we relate what ensued?—After his departure, this monster in a female form went to the dead body, and with the wantonness of a tiger mangling it's defenceless prostrate prey, stabbed it in the breast several times with a knife, whilst it lay at her feet!—Fain would we suppose this otherwise than true:—but there is no reason to question the authority from which it is derived; and it is only parallel with the rest of her actions. She had long since deeply wounded his domestic quiet, and the honour of his house. This was but an impotent exercise of

determined fury:—for he was now far beyond the reach of malice;—"nothing" now "could hurt him farther."—Ah! fatal unlawful passions!—let us drop a veil over this transaction, and proceed to the conclusion of the story.

The rest were busily employed in preparing for the reception of some visitors, who were expected to supper. They hastened to clean the parlour: with a cloth they wiped the floor where it was stained with blood; and decently strewed again the rushes * that were disordered with struggling, and might have betrayed them. The guests, two citizens of London, soon made their appearance, and were received with hospitality. When they came in, the experienced hypocrite said, "I wonder where my husband is; however, we will not wait for him;—come and sit down, for he will certainly

* In those days the parlours were furnished with benches, and strewed with rushes: no small contrast to the luxury of modern times!

not be long."—Then they sent for the sister of Mosby, who came and joined the party. They sat down to table; they ate and drank in apparent innocence and security:—the historian actually says—that they were merry!

Supper being ended, Alice Arden desired her daughter to play on the virginals *, and the company rose up to dance: she was herself foremost in gayety, and appeared to protract the time until her husband should return, at intervals pretending to be concerned for his absence.—"I wonder where he can have staid so long;—well, he will come presently I am sure:—Pray let us in the mean while play a game at the tables."—The guests excused themselves; they pleaded the time of night; said that they must return to their inn, or the doors would be shut upon them, and with this apology took their leave. When they were gone, the servants that were not privy to the

* See Appendix, No. III.

murder were sent abroad into the town; some in search of their master, and some upon other errands, whilst the doors were made fast again for fear of a surprise. Then they took the dead body, and carried it out, under favour of the darkness, to lay it beneath the garden wall, in a field next to the churchyard, through which they had a path from the house to the church. The elements seemed now to conspire against the murderers, and snow began to fall thick around them. When they reached the garden gate a new obstacle occurred;—they had forgotten the key;—one of them ran back for it, and when it was at length found, they opened the gate, and carried the corpse into the field. During the whole of this delay the snow continued to fall.—At about ten paces from the garden gate they laid down upon his back the lifeless Arden clothed in his nightgown; after which they returned the same way through the garden into the house.

The doors were once more opened,

and the servants came in that had been sent abroad. As it grew late the licentious dissembler affected increasing uneasiness. She sent again to inquire for him among the principal persons of the town with whom he was acquainted; but they replied, that they could give no information concerning him. Then she began to lament aloud; "Never,—never surely had any woman such neighbours as I have;" and the excellent actress burst into tears, which she ought rather to have shed for her own crimes. The neighbours came in and found her in an agony of grief, for the unaccountable absence of her husband. A general alarm ensued, and the mayor with his attendants went in search of Arden. They traversed the fair in every direction, and at length came to the field, where they discerned a stiffened corpse stretched out upon the snow. They presently recognized Arden, whom they found without the smallest symptom of life; and examining diligently the nature of his

wounds, observed some rushes sticking in his slippers, which had remained there ever since his struggle with the murderers: footsteps also caught their attention, clearly visible in the snow between the place where he lay and the garden door.

Upon this discovery the mayor commanded every man to stay in his place, whilst some were ordered to go round and pass through the house and garden to the spot. These, all the way as they advanced, plainly distinguished footsteps still before them in the snow; from which it was most evident that the body had been brought from the house, and that the bearers, after placing it upon the ground, had returned by the same path. Then the mayor and his company entered the house, and suspecting Alice Arden from the character that she universally bore, examined and taxed her with the murder: but she, with looks and expressions of defiance and anger, told them that she was no such person, and that they suspected her without a cause. The ser-

vants were next examined; and they, less hardened in guilt, confessed the whole affair. The evidence of her accomplices,—some hair and blood found near the house in the path of the garden,—the fatal knife and bloody cloth discovered in a tub by the side of a well, where they had inadvertently been thrown,—all these, pleading, as it were, "trumpet-tongued" against her, rendered father resistance unavailing. The hour of dissimulation was over: she joined with the rest in open avowal of the crime; and, particularly at the sight of her husband's blood, passionately confessed her guilt, and implored the mercy of Heaven.—

Mosby was instantly apprehended; and all these were arraigned at the sessions held soon after at Feversham; when their trial fully disclosed the dreadful circumstances that have been related.—They were all condemned, and suffered death in various places, that their infamy might be spread abroad,—the adulteress

at Canterbury,—her servants in Feversham,—and Mosby and his sister in London. But what afterward excited universal regret was the fate of the unfortunate Bradshaw, involved in the affair owing to the ambiguous expression of the letter, which he delivered to Alice Arden. In vain did he protest his ignorance of the matter, and relate his case; the words were extremely ambiguous; it was evident that through him Black Will had been procured; and as they were in possession of no more than his own assertions, he was condemned to die.—A case like this will teach, more powerfully than any precept, the necessity of avoiding the society of the reprobate, since the innocent, by once associating, may suffer with the guilty.—The only witness, that could have exculpated him, was Green; but he had fled, and the place of his retreat was at that time unknown, although justice overtook him also at last. After some months had elapsed he was apprehended in Cornwall, and executed

in Kent; but at his death he fully vindicated the character of Bradshaw. Black Will continuing his depredations, suffered in Holland, whither he had made his escape; and never was the life of a common malefactor more completely forfeited to society: his comrade and the painter were the only persons concerned in this tragedy, that made their escape and were never heard of more.

It should not be concealed, that Arden has been accused of conniving at the scandalous conduct of the adulteress; it was pretended, that motives of interested expectation from her relatives had rendered him blind. It is now impossible, and indeed unnecessary, to ascertain the truth of this charge; but it is very plain, that he loved her with the utmost affection, even at a time, when, if he had known her heart, he would have had the strongest reason to have driven her from his presence for ever. His unsuspecting behaviour, during the whole of the affair, may be sufficient to refute this insinua-

tion.—At any rate, it holds out an awful warning.—He that, with the power to prevent a certain crime, shall suffer it to be committed, unnoticed, unrestrained, shall he be deemed undeserving of punishment? He that shall see another walk blindly towards a precipice, and neglect to warn him of the danger, if that man fall and die, how much is he less guilty of his destruction, than if he had thrust him down?—If thou, Arden, didst indeed know the misconduct of the wife of thy bosom, and didst refuse to warn and to reprove her, thou wert surely guilty; and thy iniquitous negligence hath found a sad reward: but if thou wert ignorant, as in some respects manifestly appears, thine is a lot, that must call forth compassion.

Chastity will blush, humanity will shudder, at the name of Alice Arden. We may feel inclined to revile her as a monster; but let us rather lament her fall from virtue. In reading her story let none forget, that once she was guilt-

less of these crimes; that there was a time, when, perhaps, she too would have blushed and shuddered at the idea of adultery and murder. If in her we execrate these dreadful enormities, let us, upon all occasions, carefully guard the avenues of our own hearts, and check the first dawnings of every vice within our own breasts.

Let us not dismiss this singular narrative, without noting the just retribution, with which it closes. One person falls a prey to a complication of villany; but this effectually discovers the offenders, and brings them to punishment. Throughout these pages, in the case before us, the mercy and the justice of the Deity towards the violaters of his laws will be clearly distinguished by those, who have learned to refer human occurrences far otherwise than to blind fortune, or inevitable fate. It is not our present purpose to inquire, why Arden was suffered to perish: it is more wonderful, that he existed so long amidst so

many snares. The finger of piety, tracing these events, will mark how one infringement upon the commands of God may lead eventually to the brink of ruin; yet, what occasions of amendment are allowed to such as are not determined to rush onward to destruction. No stronger warning could have been given, than the obstacles which were repeatedly thrown in the way of these assassins; but they persisted in the accomplishment of their sanguinary designs, until the measure of their offence was complete, and swift vengeance descended upon their heads.

It is a popular persuasion, that murders never go unpunished; and this may often have acted as a preventive to those, who have been disposed to shed blood. Offenders of this description certainly, in a civilized country, very rarely escape the arm of human law; and it were to be wished, that the same restraining idea prevailed with respect to adultery, which introduces such lamentable disorder in

society. But, as Christians, we believe that there will be a time, when vice and virtue shall receive their just reward; let this thought direct us into the thorny path of rectitude, and preserve us in it to the end. In the present instance we see, that adultery and murder found their punishment even in this life; and we may rest assured, that "the Everlasting has never set his canon" against these crimes in vain.

APPENDIX, No. I.

"It was the fashion of the times for the principal gentry, lords, and courtiers, and men of all professions, not merely mechanics, to meet in St. Paul's church by eleven, and walk in the middle isle till twelve, and after dinner from three till six; during which time some discoursed of business, others of news. Now, in regard of the universal com-

merce, there happened little that did not first or last arrive here."

Osborne, quoted by Malone upon Shaksp. Henry IV.

APPENDIX, No. II.

THE following eulogium upon sir Thomas Cheyney, extracted verbally from Hollinshed's Chronicle, presents us with a curious picture of the nobility of the age, and the style of their historians.

" On Thursdaie betweene two and three in the morning the eight of December 1558, in the first yeare of our sovereigne ladie queene Elizabeth's reigne, died in the tower of London, that honorable man sir Thomas Cheineie, knight of the order, treasuror of hir majesties most honorable household, warden of the cinque ports, and of hir highnesse privie councell: whose pulses (by the report of his surgeon) laboured more than three quarters of an houre after his death, so

stronglie as though life had not beene absent from the bodie. By the report also of the same surgeon, he had the sweetest face of death to behold for one of his years that ever he saw, and died so quietlie and patientlie, that neither his face, mouth, eies, hands, or feet, were uncomelie used in the changing of this his life.

" For twenty yeares before his departure, he kept in his stable continuallie winter and summer twenty great horsse at the least, and eight or nine geldings, besides sixteene or seventeene geldings which were kept at grasse; and had in a readinesse furniture for them all to serve in the field: and no one of the same horsse or geldings but he was able and readie for anie man at armes to serve upon. Besides this he kept so bountifull a house, and was so liberall and good to his men, that well was that noble man's son, gentleman's sonne, or other that might happen to be preferred into his service. And againe, the number

of his servants to whom he gave liveries were 205, wherof in houshold were six score, besides strangers that were dailie comming and going. And his servants had no just cause, either for lacke of great wages trulie paid them everie quarter, and boord wages everie Sundaie, or plentie of meat and drinke, and lodging on good feather beds, to live out of order. And such commoditie as might by chance fall within the jurisdiction of his office of wardenrie, being a thing fit for his men, he never turned the same to his own use; but alwaies gave it them.—Whether this realme hath not lost a worthie subject, and speciallie his men a good maister, let all men judge that knew him.

"Before his departure out of this world, he seemed to have a great care for his men, thinking least without some provision for them, they would after his death run at random and live disorderlie, which like a noble man he prevented after this liberall sort as followeth. In

his last will and testament, to some he gave annuities during life, and to others a whole yeares wages after his death; but both to the one sort and the other he provided that all things which he owght them might be paied; and also so long as they used themselves like honest men, and were not reteined in service, they should have meat, drinke, and lodging at his house, till his sonne now lord Cheinie came to his lawfull age, which was the space of three yeares, in no lesse or worsse manner than they were woont and accustomed to have in his life time. In his last will he also remembered some of his freends, as well those of nobilitie and worship, as others, some with one gift and some with another; desiring them to assist his executors for the performance of his last will.

" His wit, experience, courtesie, and valiantnesse in service was such, as king Henrie the eight, and his children, to wit, king Edward the sixt, queene Marie,

and queene Elisabethe used him as one of all their privie councell, and was treasuror of all their honorable housholds during his life. He was brought up in king Henrie the seventh's house, and was one of his henchmen *. So that it appeareth before he died, he had served three kings, and two queenes. His truth was such to all these princes, that he ever lived towards them *sine macula*, serving in the court threescore years. And although he bare this great saile, yet provided he to paie everie man justlie that he owght them. His bountifulnesse, liberalitie, and courtesie to diverse noble men, gentlemen and others, attending in the court was such, that they were ever glad to have him there amongst them; and his stoutnesse and haltie courage was such, and so well knowen to the French men, as they both feared and loved him wonderfullie. In the end he

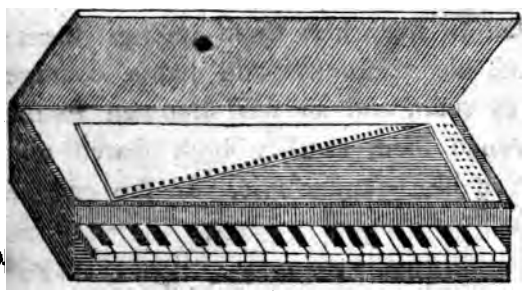
* A footman.

was so worthie a gentleman, and such a necessarie member in the commonwealth, as his want cannot but be lamented of all good and true English harts. But the Almightie must be served when his good will and pleasure is."

Hollinshed's Chronicle, fol. edit. page 1171.

APPENDIX, No. III.

The following figure of a virginal, extracted from Luscinius, who wrote in 1536, is given by sir John Hawkins, in his fourth Book of the General History of the Science and Practice of Music.—



TALE IV.

THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY.

DURING the summer of the year 1600, the kingdom of Scotland, under James the Sixth, enjoyed an unusual tranquillity. The clergy, after many struggles, were brought under great subjection; the popish earls were restored to their estates and honours, by the authority of parliament, and with the consent of the church; the rest of the nobles were at peace among themselves, and obedient to the royal authority; when, in the midst of this security, the king's life was exposed to the utmost danger, by a conspiracy altogether unexpected, and almost inexplicable.

The authors of this attempt were John Ruthven, earl of Gowrie, and his brother Alexander, the sons of that earl, who was beheaded for high treason in the year

1584. Nature had adorned both these young men, especially the elder brother, with many accomplishments, to which education had added it's most elegant improvements. More learned than is usual among persons of their rank; more religious than is common at their age of life; generous, brave, popular; their countrymen, far from thinking them capable of any atrocious crime, conceived the most sanguine hopes of their early virtues. Notwithstanding all these noble qualities, some unknown motive engaged them in a conspiracy, which, if we adhere to the account commonly received, must be transmitted to posterity, as one of the most wicked, as well as one of the worst concerted, which history has ever recorded.

On the 5th of August, as the king, who resided during the hunting season in his palace of Falkland, was going out to his sport early in the morning, he was accosted by Mr. Alexander Ruthven, who, with an air of great importance,

told the king, that, the evening before, he had met an unknown man, of a suspicious aspect, walking alone in a by-path, near his brother's house at Perth, and on searching him, had found, under his cloak, a pot filled with a great quantity of foreign gold; that he had immediately seized both him and his treasure, and, without communicating the matter to any person, had kept him confined and bound in a solitary house; and that he thought it his duty, to impart such a singular event first of all to his majesty. James immediately suspected this unknown person to be a seminary priest, supplied with foreign coin, in order to excite new commotions in the kingdom; and resolved to impower the magistrates of Perth to call the person before them, and inquire into all the circumstances of the story. Ruthven violently opposed this resolution, and with many arguments urged the king, to ride directly to Perth, and to examine the matter with his own eyes. Meanwhile the chace began;

and James, notwithstanding his passion for that amusement, could not help ruminating upon the strangeness of the tale, and on Ruthven's importunity. At last he called him, and promised to set out for Perth, when the sport was over.

The chace, however, continued long; and Ruthven, who all the while kept close by the king, was still urging him to make haste. At the death of the buck he would not allow James to stay till a fresh horse was brought him; and observing the duke of Lenox and the earl of Mar preparing to accompany the king, he intreated him to countermand them. This James refused; and though Ruthven's impatience and anxiety, as well as the apparent perturbation in his whole behaviour, raised some suspicions in his mind, yet his own curiosity, and Ruthven's solicitations, prevailed on him to set out for Perth. When within a mile of the town, Ruthven rode forward, to inform his brother of the king's arrival, though he had already dispatched two

messengers for that purpose. At a little distance from the town, the earl, attended by several of the citizens, met the king, who had only twenty persons in his train.

No preparations were made for the king's entertainment; the earl appeared pensive and embarrassed, and was at no pains to atone, by his courtesy or hospitality, for the bad fare with which he treated his guests. When the king's repast was over, his attendants were led to dine in another room, and he being left almost alone, Ruthven whispered him, that now was the time to go to the chamber, where the unknown person was kept. James commanded him to bring sir Thomas Erskine along with them; but, instead of that, Ruthven ordered him not to follow: and conducting the king up a staircase, and then through several apartments, the doors of which he locked behind him, led him at last into a small study, in which there stood a man clad in armour, with a sword and dagger by his side.

The king, who expected to have found one disarmed and bound, started at the sight, and inquired if this were the person; when Ruthven, snatching the dagger from the girdle of the man in armour, and holding it to the king's breast, said, "Remember, how unjustly my father suffered by your command; you are now my prisoner; submit to my disposal without resistance or outcry, or this dagger shall instantly avenge his blood." James expostulated with Ruthven, intreated, and flattered him. The man whom he found in the study stood all the while trembling and dismayed, without courage either to aid the king, or to second his aggressor. Ruthven protested, that if the king raised no outcry, his life should be safe; and, moved by some unknown reason, retired in order to call his brother, leaving to the man in armour the care of the king, whom be bound by oath not to make any noise during his absence.

While the king was in this dangerous situation, his attendants growing impa-

tient to know whither he had retired, one of Gowrie's domestics hastily entered the room, and told them, that the king had just rode away towards Falkland. All of them rushed out into the street; and the earl, in the utmost hurry, called for their horses. But by this time his brother had returned to the king, and swearing that now there was no remedy, he must die, offered to bind his hands. Unarmed as James was, he scorned to submit to that indignity; and closing with the assassin, a fierce struggle ensued. The man in armour stood, as formerly, amazed and motionless; and the king dragging Ruthven towards a window, which, during his absence, he had persuaded the person with whom he was left to open, cried, with a wild and affrighted voice, "Treason! — Treason! — Help! — I am murdered!—" His attendants heard, and knew the voice; and saw, at the window, a hand, which grasped the king's neck with violence. They flew with precipitation to his assistance. Lenox and Mar,

with the greater number, ran up the principal staircase, where they found all the doors shut, which they battered with the utmost fury, endeavouring to burst them open. But sir John Ramsey, entering by a back stair, which led to the apartment where the king was, found the door open; and rushing upon Ruthven, who was still struggling with the king, struck him twice with his dagger, and thrust him towards the staircase, where sir Thomas Erskine and sir Hugh Herries met, and killed him; he crying with his last breath, "Alas! I am not to blame for this action." During this scuffle, the man who had been concealed in the study escaped unobserved. Together with Ramsey, Erskine, and Herries, one Wilson, a footman, entered the room where the king was, and before they had time to shut the door, Gowrie rushed in with a drawn sword in each hand, followed by seven of his attendants well armed, and with a loud voice threatened them all with instant death.—They im-

mediately thrust the king into the little study, and shutting the door upon him encountered the earl. Notwithstanding the inequality of his numbers, sir John Ramsey pierced Gowrie through the heart, and he fell down dead without uttering a word; his followers, having received several wounds, immediately fled. Three of the king's defenders were likewise hurt in the conflict. A dreadful noise continued still at the opposite door, where many persons laboured in vain to force a passage; and the king being assured that they were Lenox, Mar, and his other friends, it was opened on the inside. They ran to the king, whom they unexpectedly found safe, with transports of congratulation; and he, falling on his knees, with all his attendants around him, was not ashamed to offer solemn thanks to God for such a wonderful deliverance.

The danger, however, was not yet over.—The inhabitants of the town, whose provost Gowrie was, and by whom

he was extremely beloved, hearing the fate of the two brothers, ran to their arms, and surrounded the house, threatening revenge, with many insolent and opprobrious speeches against the king. James endeavoured to pacify the enraged multitude, by speaking to them from the window; he admitted their magistrates into the house; related to them all the circumstances of the fact; and their fury subsiding by degrees, they dispersed. On searching the earl's pockets for papers, that might discover his designs and accomplices, nothing was found but a small parchment bag, full of magical characters and words of enchantment; and if we may believe the account of the conspiracy published by the king, who was much addicted to the superstition of the times, "while these were about him, the wound of which he died bled not; but as soon as they were taken away, the blood gushed out in great abundance." After all the dangerous adventures of this busy day, the king returned in the evening to

Falkland, having committed the dead bodies of the two brothers to the custody of the magistrates of Perth.

Notwithstanding the minute detail which the king gave of all the circumstances of this conspiracy against his life, the motives, which induced the two brothers to attempt an action so detestable, the end they had in view, and the accomplices on whose aid they depended, were altogether unknown. The words of Ruthven to the king gave some grounds to think, that the desire of revenging their father's death had instigated them to this attempt. But, whatever injuries their father had suffered, it is scarcely probable, that they could impute them to the king, whose youth, as well as his subjection at that time to the violence of a faction, exempted him from being the object of resentment, on account of actions which were not done by his command. James had even endeavoured to repair the wrongs, which the father had suffered, by benefits to his children; and Gowrie

himself; sensible of his favour, had acknowledged it with the warmest expressions of gratitude. Three of the earl's attendants, being convicted of assisting him in this assault on the king's servants, were executed at Perth; but they could give no light into the motives, which had prompted their master to an action so repugnant to these acknowledgments. Diligent search was made for the person concealed in the study, and from him great discoveries were expected. But Andrew Henderson, the earl's steward, who, upon a promise of pardon, confessed himself to be the man, was as much a stranger to his master's design as the rest; and though placed in the study by Gowrie's command, he did not even know for what end that station had been assigned him. The whole transaction remained as impenetrably dark as ever; and the two brothers, it was concluded, had concerted their scheme without either confidant or accomplice, with unexampled secrecy as well as wickedness.

An accident, no less strange than the other circumstances of the story, and which happened nine years after, discovered that this opinion, however plausible, was ill-founded; and that the two brothers had not carried on their machinations all alone. One Sprot, a notary, having whispered among several persons, that he knew some secrets relating to Gowrie's conspiracy, the privy council thought the matter worthy their attention, and ordered him to be seized. His confession was partly voluntary, and partly forced from him by torture. According to his account, Logan of Restalrig, a gentleman of an opulent fortune, but of dissolute morals, was privy to all Gowrie's intentions, and an accomplice in his crimes. Mr. Ruthven, he said, had frequent interviews with Logan, in order to concert the plan of their operations; the earl had corresponded with him to the same purpose; and one Bour, Logan's confident, was trusted with the secret, and carried the letters between them.

Both Logan and Bour were now dead. But Sprot affirmed that he had read letters written both by Gowrie and Logan on that occasion; and, in confirmation of his testimony, several of Logan's letters, which a curiosity fatal to himself had prompted Sprot to steal from among Bour's papers, were produced. These were compared, by the privy council, with papers of Logan's handwriting, and the resemblance was manifest. Persons of undoubted credit, and well qualified to judge of the matter, examined them, and swore to their authenticity. Death itself did not exempt Logan from persecution; *his bones were dug up and tried for high treason*, and by a sentence, equally odious and illegal, his lands were forfeited, and his posterity declared infamous. Sprot was condemned, the reward of his unfortunate babbling and curiosity, to be hanged for misprision of treason. He adhered to his confession to the last, and having promised, on the scaffold, to give the spectators a sign in

confirmation of the truth of what he had deposed, he thrice clapped his hands after he was thrown off the ladder by the executioner.

But though it was thus unexpectedly discovered, that Gowrie did not act without associates, little additional light is thrown by this discovery on the motives and intention of his conduct. It appears almost incredible, that two young men of such distinguished virtue should revolt all at once from their duty, and attempt a crime so atrocious as the murder of their sovereign. It appears still more improbable, that they should have concerted their undertaking with so little foresight and prudence. If they intended, that the deed should have remained concealed, they could not have chosen a more improper scene for executing it than their own house. If they intended, that Henderson should have struck the blow, they could not have pitched on a man more destitute of the courage, that must direct the hand of an assassin; or could they

expect that he, unsolicited, and unacquainted with their purpose, would venture on such a desperate action. If Ruthven meant to stab the king with his own hand, why did he withdraw the dagger, after it was pointed at his breast? How could he leave the king, after such a plain declaration of his intention? Was it not preposterous, to commit him to the keeping of such a timid associate as Henderson? For what purpose did he waste time, in binding the hands of an unarmed man, whom he might easily have dispatched with the sword? Had Providence permitted them to embrue their hands in the blood of their sovereign, what advantage could have accrued to them by his death? and what claims or pretensions could they have opposed to the rights of his children? Inevitable and instant vengeance, together with perpetual infamy, were the only consequences they could expect to follow such a crime!

On the other hand, it is impossible to

believe, that the king had formed any design against the life of the two brothers. They had not incurred his indignation by any crime; and were in no degree the objects of his jealousy or hatred: nor was he of a spirit so sanguinary, or so noted for rash and desperate valour, as to have attempted to murder them in their own house, where they were surrounded with many domestics, he only with a slender and unarmed train; where they could call to their assistance the inhabitants of a city, at the devotion of their family, while he was at a distance from all aid; and least of all would he have chosen for his associates in such an enterprise the earl of Mar and the duke of Lenox, the former connected in close friendship with the house of Gowrie, and the latter married to one of the earl's sisters.

Whichever of these opposite systems we embrace; whether we impute the intention of murder to Gowrie or to the king; insuperable difficulties arise, and we are involved in darkness, mystery,

and contradictions. Perhaps the source of the whole conspiracy ought to be searched far deeper; and by deriving it from a more remote cause, we may discover it to be less criminal.

To keep the king of Scots in continual dependance, was one great object of the policy of Elizabeth, queen of England. In order to this, she sometimes soothed him, and sometimes bribed his ministers and favourites: and when she failed of attaining her end by these means, she encouraged the clergy to render any administration, which she distrusted, unpopular, by decrying it; or stirred up some faction of the nobles, to oppose and to overturn it. In that fierce age, men little acquainted with the arts of undermining a ministry by intrigue, had recourse to the ruder practice of rendering themselves masters of the king's person, that they might thereby obtain the directions of his councils. Those nobles, who upon a former occasion had seized the person of the king, for which

Gowrie, the father of these unfortunate brothers, was beheaded, were instigated and supported by Elizabeth. Bothwell, in all his wild attempts, enjoyed her protection; and when they miscarried, he was secure of a retreat in her dominions. The connexions which James had been forming of late with the Roman catholic princes, his secret negotiations in England with her subjects, and the maxims by which he governed his own kingdom, all contributed to excite her jealousy. She dreaded some great revolution in Scotland to be approaching; and it was her interest to prevent it. The earl of Gowrie was one of the most powerful of the Scottish nobles, and descended from ancestors warmly attached to the English interest. He had adopted the same system, and believed the welfare of his country to be inseparably connected with the subsistence of the alliance between the two kingdoms. During his residence at Paris, he had contracted an intimate friendship with sir Henry Neville, the queen's am-

bassador there, and was recommended by him to his court, as a person of whom great use might be made. Elizabeth received him, as he passed through England, with distinguished marks of respect and favour. From all these circumstances a suspicion may arise, that the plan of the conspiracy against the king was formed at that time, in concert with her. Such a suspicion prevailed in that age; and, from the letters of Nicholson, Elizabeth's agent in Scotland, it appears not to be destitute of foundation. An English ship was observed hovering, for some time, in the mouth of the frith of Forth. The earl's two younger brothers fled into England after the ill success of the conspiracy, and were protected by Elizabeth. James himself, though he prudently concealed it, took great umbrage at her behaviour. None, however, of Elizabeth's intrigues in Scotland tended to hurt the king's person, but only to circumscribe his authority, and to thwart his schemes. His life was the surest safe-

guard of her own, and restrained the popish pretenders to her crown, and their abettors, from desperate attempts, to which their impatience and bigotry might, otherwise, have urged them on. To have encouraged Gowrie to murder his sovereign, would, on her part, have been an act of the utmost imprudence. Nor does this seem to have been the intention of the two brothers. Mr. Ruthven, first of all, endeavoured to decoy the king to Perth without any attendants. When these proved more numerous than was expected, the earl employed a stratagem in order to separate them from the king, by pretending that he had rode away towards Falkland, and by calling hastily for their horses, that they might follow him. By their shutting James up, meanwhile, in a distant corner of the house, and by attempting to bind his hands, their design seems to have been rather to seize, than to assassinate him. Though Gowrie had not collected his followers in such numbers, as to have been

able to detain him long a prisoner in that part of the kingdom by open force, he might have been landed at Fast castle, a house of Logan's, in which, according to many obscure hints in his letters, some rendezvous of the conspirators was to be held. Amidst the surprise and terrour into which the king must have been thrown by the violence offered to him, it was extremely natural for him to conclude, that his life was sought. It was the interest of all his followers, to confirm him in this belief, and to magnify his danger, in order to add to the importance and merit of their own services. Thus his fear, and their vanity, aided by the credulity and wonder, which the contemplation of any great and tragical event, when not fully understood, is apt to inspire, magnified the whole transaction. On the other hand, the extravagance and improbability of the circumstances, which were added, detracted from the credit of those, which really happened; and even furnished pretences for

calling in question the truth of the whole conspiracy.

The account of what had happened at Perth reached Edinburgh next morning. The privy council commanded the ministers of that city instantly to assemble their people; and, after relating to them the circumstances of the conspiracy formed against the king's life, to return public thanks to God for the protection, which he had so visibly afforded him. But as the first accounts transmitted to Edinburgh, written in a hurry, and while the circumstances of the conspiracy were but imperfectly known, and the passions which it excited strongly felt, were indistinct, exaggerated, and contradictory, the ministers laid hold of this; and though they offered to give public thanks to God for the king's safety, they refused to enter into any detail of particulars, or to utter from the chair of truth, what appeared to be still dubious and uncertain.

A few days after, the king returned

to Edinburgh; and though Galloway, the minister of his own chapel, made an harangue to the people at the public cross, in which he recited all the circumstances of the conspiracy; though James himself, in their hearing, confirmed his account; though he commanded a narrative of the whole transaction to be published; the ministers of that city, as well as many of their brethren, still continued incredulous and unconvinced. Their high esteem of Gowrie, their jealousy of every part of the king's conduct, added to some false and many improbable circumstances in the narrative, not only led them to suspect the whole, but gave their suspicions an air of credibility. But at length the king, partly by arguments, partly by threats, prevailed on all of them, except Mr. Robert Bruce, to own, that they were convinced of the truth of the conspiracy. He could be brought no farther than to declare, that he reverenced the king's account of the transaction, but could not say, that he himself was per-

suaded of the truth of it. The scruples or obstinacy of a single man would have been little regarded; but as the same spirit of incredulity began to spread among the people, the example of one in so high reputation for integrity and abilities was extremely dangerous. The king was at the utmost pains, to convince and to gain Bruce; but finding it impossible to remove his doubts, he deprived him of his benefice, and, after repeated delays, and many attempts toward a reconcilement, banished him the kingdom.

The proceedings of parliament were not retarded by any scruples of this sort. The dead bodies of the two brothers were produced there, according to law; an indictment was preferred against them; witnesses were examined; and, by an unanimous sentence, their estates and honours were forfeited; the punishment due to traitors was inflicted on their dead bodies; and, as if the punishment hitherto in use did not express sufficient detestation of their crimes, the parliament enacted, that

the surname of Ruthven should be abolished; and in order to preserve the memory of the king's miraculous escape, and to declare the sense which the nation had of the divine goodness, to all future ages, appointed the 5th of August to be observed, annually, as a day of public thanksgiving.

Without adding any farther comment upon these events, we shall observe, that they are well calculated to destroy all envy of the condition of royalty in a reflecting mind. The diadem and the sceptre may attract the gaze of a thoughtless multitude; but the truly wise man will not behold the possessor of them with an invidious eye. He will see, that a throne is a seat of complicated care, exposed to the asaults of dissatisfaction or ambition: he will cast a smile of compassion upon those, who struggle to obtain this pinnacle of grandeur; a situation where, of all others in the wide round of society, tumults of anxiety must agitate the breast.

For, let him who wears the crown be the most complete pattern of excellence, that the imperfection of human nature ever displayed; let impartial justice, tempered with true mercy, be the unvarying features of his reign; let the welfare of his people be his only aim; still he cannot fail to have some envious or refractory spirits amongst those whom he governs. It is impossible for him to please all; and it is equally impossible for him to be out of the reach of designing enemies. His therefore is a post of constant danger; and a virtuous individual, who thus undertakes to expose himself for the community, possesses a peculiar claim to the gratitude of his subjects. For them he forfeits the comforts of an humble unknown station; for them he endures thoughtful days and sleepless nights. Innumerable anxieties must prey upon him, which the private man can never know; nor can his pillow afford him much ease, if he be one whose views of happiness are bounded by this life.—But if it be asked, "Whence should

such a mortal draw his consolations?" a source is open to every one, that heartily endeavours to find it. Religion is a remedy for all the ills of this world. Christian philosophy is an impenetrable armour.—Blessed is that ruler, who places his trust in the King of Kings; and blessed is that people, over whom he bears the sway.

TALE V.

MASANIELLO.

In the year 1646, the kingdom of Naples was subject to the house of Austria, and governed by a viceroy. The Neapolitans had supported the government in this house with a great spirit of loyalty and liberality, and had submitted themselves to many voluntary impositions and burdensome taxes. But in this year, the necessities of the government requiring it, the

subject of a new donative was in agitation. —Universal discontent prevailed. The design now formed was to lay a fresh tax upon fruits, comprehending all sorts, as well dry as green, from the most costly and rare to the most common productions of the orchard and garden; mulberries, grapes, figs, apples, pears; none were omitted, from which the smallest profit could be derived. The populace began to murmur; and being thus deprived of their ordinary subsistence, as soon as it took place, resolved to throw off, not only this, but all other insupportable exactions, formerly imposed by the ministers of the court of Spain. They made their grievances known to the viceroy by the public cries and lamentations of women and children, as he passed through the market-place, and petitioned him, by means of cardinal Filomarino the archbishop, and others, to take off this oppression. With many fair words he promised to redress the grievance, and convened proper persons, to devise by all means some method of removing this

odious tax. But the farmers of the tax, being interested in its continuance, secretly contrived to hinder the happy effect of this scheme; and completely succeeded in dissuading him from performing his promise to the people; for they represented to him, that all the clamour arose merely from a miserable rabble, not worth regarding.

In a corner of the great market-place dwelt Thomas Anello, or, as he has since been usually termed, Masaniello. He was born at Amalfi, was now in the twenty-fourth year of his age, stout, of a good countenance, and middle stature. His habit was simple, in the usual style of a Neapolitan mariner: he went barefoot; linen trowsers, a cap, and a blue waistcoat, constituted his apparel. His business was to angle for little fish with a rod, hook, and line; as also to buy fish, and to retail them. From his youth he had evinced a hardihood of character, and possessed a sort of rude eloquence, which is not uncommon in persons of this class at Naples.

This man, reduced to misery, and inflamed by the general murmurs of the city, desperately resolved either to suppress the taxes, or to perish. One day, as he was going towards his house in great indignation, he met with Perrone, a famous captain of banditti, who, after some deed of violence, had, with a comrade, fled to a church for refuge. They observed the rage of Masaniello as he passed by, and inquired the cause. He answered furiously, "I will engage to be hanged, if I do not right this city." They laughed at his words, saying, "A proper person, truly, to right the city of Naples!" Masaniello replied, "Do not laugh: if I had two or three of my humour, you should see what I could accomplish. Will you join with me?"—"Yes," said they. Then, when they had given him their solemn assurance, he departed.

Shortly after this conference he fell into a violent passion, because his fish was taken from him by some officers of the government, upon his refusal to pay the tax

on them. He then resolved immediately to take advantage of the murmurs of the people against the impost upon fruit. He went among the fruit-shops, that were in that quarter, advising them, that the next day they should come in a body to the market, with a resolution to tell the country fruiterers, that they would buy no more taxed fruit. A number of boys were accustomed to assemble in the market-place, to pick up such fruit as fell. Masaniello was to be seen in the midst of these, diligently teaching them cries and clamours suited to his purpose. He enrolled such a number of them, between sixteen and seventeen years of age, that they amounted to five hundred, and at last to two thousand. Of this militia he constituted himself the general, giving every one of them in their hands a little weak cane. They exclaimed tumultuously, "Down with the bad government—No taxes—Long live the king of Spain."—These occurrences took place upon the 7th day of July.

On the morrow, the shopkeepers observing his instructions, a riot ensued between them and the fruiterers; and Anaclerio, the elect of the people, was sent by the regent of the city to restore order. One of the most active in the disturbance was a cousin of Masaniello; he also had received his instructions, and was particularly instrumental in exasperating the people. He perceived, that he could sell his fruit but at a low price, which, when the tax was paid, would not only deprive him of all profit, but render him a loser. Under this impression he fell into a great fury, threw two large baskets on the ground, and cried out, "God gives plenty, and the bad government a dearth: I care not a straw for this fruit; let every one partake of it." The boys eagerly ran to gather and eat the fruit, and Masaniello rushed in among them, crying, "No tax; no tax."—Anaclerio endeavoured to interpose; he threatened him with whipping and the gallies; but this so inflamed the resentment of the crowd, that the

fruiterers and all the people threw figs, apples, and other fruits in his face. Masaniello struck him upon the breast with a stone, and encouraged his militia of boys to do the same. It was well that Anaclerio sought his safety in flight.

Upon this success the people flocked to the market-place in great numbers; and exclaimed aloud against those intolerable grievances, under which they groaned; protesting their resolution, to submit to them no longer. The fury still increasing, Masaniello leaped upon the highest table, which was among the fruiterers, and harangued the crowd; at one time comparing himself to Moses, who delivered the Egyptians from the rod of Pharaoh; at another time to Peter, who was a fisherman as well as himself, yet rescued Rome and the world from the slavery of Satan; promising them a similar deliverance by his assistance, and protesting his readiness to lay down his life in so glorious a cause. By the repetition of various expressions of this nature,

Masaniello highly inflamed the minds of the people, already disposed in their hearts to cooperate with him in this design.

To begin the work, the most desperate of the rioters set fire to the house adjoining to the toll-house for fruit; these were both burned to the ground, with all their books and furniture. The shops were immediately shut up, and the numbers increased every moment; when the multitude had accumulated to many thousands, they broke open the prisons, and proceeded to other parts of the city; there they plundered all the other toll-houses of all their writings, books, and great quantities of money; many rich moveables they threw indiscriminately into a great fire of straw, and burned to ashes in the streets. The people, meeting with no resistance, assumed more boldness, and advanced towards the palace of the duke d'Arcos, viceroy of Naples. The first militia of Masaniello consisting of two thousand boys led the march, every one

lifting up his cane, upon the top of which was fixed a piece of black cloth: their cries were loud and lamentable, exciting the compassion, and intreating the assistance of their fellow-citizens.

Being arrived before the palace, they redoubled their clamours: they demanded to be liberated not only from the tax upon fruit, but every impost besides, especially that upon corn. At last they entered the palace, and rifled it, notwithstanding the resistance of the guards, whom they disarmed. The viceroy hurried into his coach, intending to secure himself within the church of St. Lewis: he could not, however, accomplish this so secretly as to be unobserved by the people, who stopped the coach, and surrounding it on all sides with drawn swords, threatened his life, unless he would take off the taxes. He promised faithfully, that they should be relieved; he gave them the most solemn assurances of redress; but the eloquence, that chiefly facilitated his escape, was some money, which he threw

among the multitude; and whilst they were engaged in scrambling to pick it up, he drove off, entered safely into the church, and ordered the doors to be closed.

The prince of Bisignano was much beloved by the people; and in this emergency they applied to him, to be their intercessor and defender. He promised to obtain what they desired; but finding himself unable, after much labour and fatigue, to restrain their licentiousness or quell their fury, he took the first opportunity of disengaging himself from the labyrinth of popular tumult. After the retirement of the prince, the populace, finding themselves without a head, with loud acclamations elected Masaniello their leader; nor was he at all unwilling to accept the charge. They also appointed Genoino, a priest of approved knowledge, temper, and abilities, to attend his person; and for another companion they chose the celebrated Perrone, who has been already mentioned. Ma-

saniello, by his spirit, good sense, and bravery, in a short time won the hearts of this mixed multitude: they, voluntarily and solemnly, transferred unto him the supreme command, and obeyed him in the most submissive manner.

The viceroy had now taken refuge in one of the principal fortresses of the city. He perceived, that any attempt to resist so furious a populace would be vain, and only serve to increase the flame. Accordingly, he endeavoured to adopt measures of reconciliation, and sent to Masaniello promising an immediate suppression of all the taxes. But the people refused to agree to his terms: not content with these promises they imperiously demanded that the original charter of Charles the Fifth should be delivered into their hands; a charter in which that prince had promised the Neapolitans, that no new taxes should be laid upon them without the consent of the court of Rome.

Early in the morning of Tuesday, the

9th day of July, Masaniello found himself at the head of fifty thousand men.—Women are ever active to take a part in popular commotion, and, when once excited, surpass the other sex in ungoverned fury.—An incredible multitude of these also appeared, in the spirit of Amazons, variously and fantastically armed, breathing threats and revenge.—Naples seemed delivered up to confusion and desolation. Flames from the palaces of the principal nobility ascended to the skies, and all their furniture was most scrupulously consumed. A list was made of above sixty persons, who had farmed the taxes, or had been any way concerned in the customhouses;—the cry was, that they had enriched themselves with the blood of the people, and ought to be made examples to future ages. An order was, therefore, issued, that their houses and goods should be burned, which was executed accordingly, and with so much regularity, that no one was suffered to touch the least thing. Many, for steal-

ing but very small trifles from the flames, were, at the command of Masaniello, hanged by the public executioner in the market-place. Thus, a rigorous and immediate justice presided amidst these scenes of horrour, and threw a degree of salutary restraint upon a lawless multitude.

The viceroy, in the utmost agitation, was revolving in his mind a variety of expedients to appease the Neapolitans, and bring them to an accommodation. At last he resolved to adopt a measure, which seemed most likely to succeed. He applied to the archbishop, cardinal Filomarino, of whose attachment to the government he had no doubt, and of whose paternal care and affection the people were well assured. This person, he thought, was well qualified to be a mediator between them. Complying with the general request, he gave the cardinal this valuable charter of Charles the Fifth. This was to be publicly confirmed by lawful authority, and an indulgence or

pardon was to be published for all offences. These steps would, doubtless, have restored tranquillity, had it not been for an unfortunate event, which occurred on the next day.

The bishop had already prevailed upon Masaniello to convoke all the captains and chief commanders of the people; and every one was elated in the hope, that a happy accommodation would speedily ensue: when on a sudden the rage of the people rose to a greater height, than ever it had done before.—

The duke of Matalona, and his brother, Joseph, prince of Caraffa, undertook to procure the assassination of Masaniello; for they imagined, that, if this scheme succeeded, the seditious, deprived of their leader, would soon be reduced to subjection. In prosecution of this design they seduced by bribery the unprincipled Perrone, and engaged him to betray his friend. Masaniello had commissioned this captain of banditti to introduce five hundred armed horsemen into the city,

over whom he alone was to have the command, and who were to be particularly devoted to the service of the people. Under this pretence, the troop of horse, completely armed, entered Naples with Perrone at their head. He conducted them into the market-place, and a part of them dismounting were led into the church of the Carmelites, where Masaniello was at that time surrounded by an immense crowd. The men passed before him, as in review; and upon a certain signal, seven of the banditti fired at him in the same moment; but so inexpertly, that he did not receive the slightest wound.

The effect produced by this incident was instantaneous, and almost electrical. The horrib tumult that followed was like the sudden burst of a tempest. A fierce conflict ensued in the church, and a great number of the banditti were slain. A stage had been erected in the middle of the market-place, where Masaniello, with his counsellors, gave public audi-

ence, received petitions, redressed grievances, and gave sentence in all causes both civil and criminal. Thither they dragged the dead bodies, and fixing the heads upon pikes, ranged them around this rude tribunal. A part of the conspirators saved themselves by flight, but Perrone, and some others, were arrested upon the spot. From them it was learned, that this plot had been formed at the instigation of the duke of Matalona, and his brother Caraffa. They also confessed, that, after the death of Masaniello, it was their intention to have blown up the whole church of the Carmelites, for which purpose, they had already lodged beneath it twenty-eight barrels of gunpowder; and that Perrone and his comrades had already received a very considerable reward.

This confession did not however save their lives. Masaniello issued orders, that they should all be beheaded, and their heads were fixed upon pikes in the market place, by the side of their accomplices.

But the anger of the people was chiefly directed against the duke of Matalona. It was reported, that he had retired into the convent of the capuchins, and a body of armed men was sent to dispatch him. But, having already received intelligence of it from some spy, he had just time to escape in the habit of a capuchin, and to withdraw to his estates in the country. The same good fortune did not attend his brother Caraffa; but whilst he was in the very act of concealing himself in the monastery of Santa Maria Nuova, he was betrayed by a female, and delivered up to the populace. His head was struck off, carried about in triumph, and then placed along with those of the other unfortunate victims of the fury of Masaniello. They stoned the body as they dragged it through the streets, and it was afterward fixed to a stake with this inscription, "Joseph Caraffa, rebel and traitor to his country."

The projected reconciliation now appeared at an end; it was even suspected,

that the viceroy was concerned in the conspiracy. The barriers of the streets were shut; and orders were given, that the aqueducts leading to the castle, where the viceroy and his family, and all the principal officers of state were, should be cut off; and that no provision, except some few roots and herbs, should be carried thither. The army of Masaniello still increased; it was now indeed become quite formidable. On the morning of the eleventh, it amounted to upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand men, well armed, and prepared to obey upon the slightest signal. One of the first orders that he gave was an injunction throughout all the city, that no one should appear abroad in a cloak, or any other dress favourable for the concealment of arms; all this was observed with the greatest precision. The next order was to this effect; that none of the nobility or gentry should retain arms in their possession, but should surrender them to the people.

Whilst they were thus engaged in executing the pleasure of Masaniello, the cardinal and viceroy conferred upon the means of appeasing the public rage. The viceroy applied to him, to assure the people of his sincere good intentions towards them, his abhorrence of the design of the banditti, and his resolution to use all his authority to bring them to due punishment. Thus the treaty was once more renewed, and the cardinal was commissioned to read before the people the capitulation offered by the viceroy, together with the charter granted by Charles the Fifth to the city of Naples. All this was performed with the utmost solemnity in the church of the Carmelites; after which the cardinal persuaded Masaniello to accompany him to the duke d'Arcos. Orders were given by this demagogue, that all the streets leading to the palace should be swept clean, and that all masters of families should hang their windows and balconies with the richest silks and tapestries. Upon this

flatering occasion he threw aside his simple habit of a mariner, and assumed the air of a sovereign and triumphant conqueror. Attired in cloth of silver, with a plume of feathers in his hat; and mounted upon a beautiful charger, with a drawn sword in his hand, he went attended by fifty thousand of the choicest of the people. When the cavalcade had arrived at the square before the castle, he harangued the multitude, and advised them not to lay down their arms, until he had received a confirmation of their privileges by the king of Spain: he concluded by promising to return at the expiration of an hour, after having treated with the duke d'Arcos for the interests of the community.

The cardinal introduced Masaniello to the viceroy, who received him with marks of great distinction. Upon his protesting, that he had no other end in view during the whole of his conduct, but to promote the interests of the king himself, and of his people, the duke

embraced him, assuring him that he was not to blame; that he had not offended his majesty, and that he would with the greatest pleasure consult with him upon the means of restoring quiet and order in Naples. Then, retiring with him and the cardinal, they consulted together upon the measures necessary to be adopted for the restoration of peace.

They had not remained long in this situation, when a considerable tumult was heard before the castle. The people beginning to be impatient on account of Masaniello, were calling him back with loud cries. To appease them he made his appearance in a balcony, attended by the cardinal and the viceroy. His presence immediately calmed the uneasiness and clamours of a vast multitude; and here he gave the viceroy surprising proofs of the extent of his authority over the people. Whatsoever cry he gave out, it was immediately echoed by thousands of voices; when he placed his finger upon his mouth profound universal silence reigned; the

uproar was calmed, and scarce a man was seen to breathe: at last he ordered, upon pain of death, that they should all retire: he was punctually and instantly obeyed; and the effect was so extraordinary, that they seemed almost to have vanished away by the intervention of some magic power.

Thus far the energetic, hardy character of this singular man was truly astonishing; but from this period his boundless authority affected his brain. He soon became arrogant, and ferocious. On Friday, he caused the palace of the duke of Matalona to be burned to the ground; and having been informed, that some of the most valuable moveables had been secreted in the religious houses, he commanded, upon pain of death, that they should be all brought out, and burned in the market; and he threatened also to set those religious houses on fire, that should refuse to obey him. Saturday the 13th of July was the day appointed for publishing in a solemn manner the ar-

ticles of the capitulation, in the presence of the viceroy, the council, and all the ministers of state, in the great church of the Carmelites.

The ceremony was conducted with much pomp, whilst Masaniello played the principal character in the drama, arbitrarily correcting every article; nor did any one presume to contradict him, when he added or diminished at his pleasure. After this he exacted a solemn oath from the viceroy, and the other ministers, to maintain the perpetual execution of it; and insisted upon it, that they should pledge themselves to obtain a confirmation from his Catholic majesty. The service of the "*Te Deum*" was sung as upon the most holy solemnities: during which, Masaniello, apparently intoxicated with his glory and success, sent a great variety of messages to the viceroy, each more strange and extravagant than the former. The duke d'Arcos, with the utmost prudence, took care to refuse him nothing, still replying in the

affirmative to all his demands. Masaniello afterward addressed the whole assembly, and declared at the close, that now having accomplished his honest design, he would return to his former humble condition: it was not his own private interest, but that of the king, the people, and his country, which had incited him to pursue this line of conduct; for himself he desired no reward. He tore his splendid dress, and would have cast himself at the feet of the viceroy and his ministers; but the duke would not permit him; and each party retired.

Had Masaniello preserved these resolutions, he might justly have been esteemed one of the greatest heroes, that any age or country ever produced.—The accounts of his motives are various: some affirm, that he was instigated by his wife and kindred through fear; others, that he was allured by the tasted sweets of rule and power; but he certainly still continued his authority; and, what is worse, exercised it

in the most tyrannical manner. This burden of popular applause, these respectful attentions of the viceroy, and all his court, were sufficient to complete the intoxication of Masaniello, which soon degenerated into absolute madness.—On Sunday he was guilty of all sorts of extravagant actions, gallopping on horseback from one end of the city to the other; turning executioner himself; capriciously ordering and countermanding, without the least propriety, the most severe punishments for the slightest offences; or else, with equal indiscretion, bestowing the most important posts upon persons of the vilest description.

Such a conduct soon rendered him odious to that same populace, whose idol he had been for several days. On the evening of Sunday, the heat being excessive, he was persuaded to walk upon the seashore near Pausilippo, where he drank a considerable quantity of wine. It has also been asserted, that the viceroy had secretly procured a certain drug to

be mingled with these refreshments, which produced the effect of completely disordering his brain; so that on the next day, the 15th, he gave proofs of the most decided madness, to such a degree, that the people looked upon him as a scourge, from which they desired to be delivered. His most faithful friends, and those in whom he reposed the strongest confidence, fled from him, as from a wild beast. In this juncture it was not very difficult for the viceroy to find persons to assassinate him.

On Tuesday, the day upon which the Carmelites celebrated the feast of the Virgin, in the same church which had been rendered the theatre of his glory, and of his shortlived reign, Masaniello experienced a mortifying reverse of fortune. He attempted to address the multitude, but with so little sense, that they refused to hear him any longer. His extreme care and vigilance, during the whole of this revolution, would hardly allow him to eat or sleep; and as he

now appeared extremely fatigued, he was invited to repose himself in the monastery of the Carmelites, which stood upon the seashore. Here, indeed, he found rest; but it was the sleep of death. —Four desperate cavaliers followed him to the spot; and he had no soon entered the house, than each fired an arquebuss at him, and he fell beneath their wounds. "Ungrateful traitors*!" he exclaimed, and immediately expired. His head was cut off, and born in triumph through the crowd, who, seeing themselves without a leader, had not even the courage to bewail the loss of him, whom, but a few days before, they had considered as their deliverer, and tutelar divinity.

What occurred at Naples immediately after the death of this adventurer is well related by a contemporary writer†.— "The report of his death is communicated

* "Ah, traditori ingrati."

† Memoires Secrets de Bussy Rabutin.

throughout Naples with momentary rapidity; and no one discovers emotions either of grief or of pity. One of the assassins cut off the head of Masaniello, and carried it, all bleeding as it was, to the viceroy, after which he threw it into one of the ditches of the city. Some persons seize the body, drag it through the streets, expose it to a thousand outrages, and the populace survey all this with that indifference, that insensibility, which constitutes so great a part of their character. On the next day they recover their former sentiments for Masaniello, and equally display their mutability. His lot is deplored, he is lamented, regretted; his assassins are detested; they reproach themselves that they did not avenge his death, and weeping and bewailing prevail throughout all Naples. Diligent search is made for the head and the body of Masaniello; they are placed together, and laid upon a bier: the body is covered with a royal mantle, upon the head is set a crown of laurels, in the right

hand a truncheon, in the left a naked sword. In this style he is pompously born through every quarter of the city, followed by eighty thousand souls.

"The viceroy sent eight pages, each bearing a torch of white wax in his hand, to grace the solemnity; and he issued orders to all the military, that they should perform the salute with their arms as the corpse passed by. On that evening it was interred with all the ceremonies, which usually take place at the funerals of persons of the first distinction. The various expressions of universal lamentation, mingled with the chanting of the priests, formed an unprecedented combination of sounds of woe."

Such were the last obsequies paid to the celebrated Masaniello, who was a king during eight days, a madman during four, massacred as a tyrant, revered as the deliverer of his country, and almost as a saint.

See here a remarkable instance of, what is usually termed, the caprice of

fortune. See, too, how soon a mortal, unaccustomed to elevation, grows intoxicated and giddy upon the pinnacle of grandeur. The scenes before us faintly represent the confusion and horrours of civil commotion. Happy is he in whose calm days no tumult agitates a state; who is neither the slave of tyrannical injustice, nor the victim of a frantic liberty.

The hero of this tale has passed before us like a meteor, emerging from obscurity with a brilliant flash, but quickly lost again in darkness. If we look back with candour upon the actions of this extraordinary personage, we can hardly refuse to confess, that, however he may have conducted himself towards the latter end of his "brief authority," his original motives appear to have been patriotic and pure. But the most virtuous design may be thwarted by unexpected temptation.—How often have the love of country, and a desire to promote the public welfare, degenerated into wild ambition,

and the thirst of power! Every allowance is to be made for Masaniello. The artful praises of the viceroy, operating in as subtle a manner as his poisoned wine, the unbounded approbation and obedience of thousands around him, were sufficient to have turned the brain of one, who had possessed more individual advantages than the untutored fisherman of Naples.—So dangerous is popular applause; gratifying to human pride, but too often leading it's object to ruin.—A Christian poet has, upon another occasion, in expressions of equal propriety and beauty, admirably described it's influence and effects:—

"Oh popular applause! what heart of man
Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms?
The wisest and the best feel urgent need
Of all their caution in thy gentlest gales;
But, swell'd into a gust—who then, alas!
With all his canvass set, and inexpert,
And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power?
Praise from the rivell'd lips of toothless, bald
Decrepitude; and in the looks of lean
And craving poverty; and in the bow

Respectful of the smutch'd artificer;
Is oft too welcome, and may much disturb
The bias of the purpose. How much more,
Pour'd forth.....,...
In language soft as adoration breathes?
Ah, spare your idol! think him human still.
Charms he may have, but he has frailties too!
Dote not too much, nor spoil what ye admire."

Cowper, The Task. Book II.

TALE VI.

THE CAMPDEN WONDER.

In the county of Gloucester is that extensive range of lofty hills called the Cotswold, celebrated of old for numerous flocks. To the right of the highroad, that passes over these bleak heights towards Evesham and it's fertile vale, stands the small town of Campden. The tower of the church, a rural object, frequently attracts the eye of the traveller; before he arrives at the awful declivity, which, descending to Broadway, more powerfully arrests his attention, by an unexpected display of luxuriant prospect; the horizon partly melting into the distant sky, and partly bounded by the bold mountains of Wales.

Campden, whatever may have been it's circumstances in former ages, can boast of no grandeur in modern times.

It is now scarcely known, but to those who search the records of antiquity, that it was once famous for a convention of Saxon princes: this fact is too remote and uninteresting to confer any celebrity upon it in these days.—Campden will attract more general notice from the following remarkable story.

In this place in the year 1660 lived William Harrison; he was steward to lady Campden, and was at this time about seventy years of age. The greatest part of his life had been spent in the service of this noble family, and he had long discharged this office with fidelity.—It was on the 16th day of August in the same year, that he walked from Campden to Charringworth, about two miles distant, to receive his lady's rent.—Contrary to his usual custom, the evening came on, before he had returned; and his wife, under some anxiety, between the hours of eight and nine, sent her servant, John Perry, on the way to Charringworth to meet his master: but, to

her great concern, neither Mr. Harrison nor his servant returned that night.

With the dawn of the next morning, Edward Harrison, the son, went towards Charringworth, to inquire after his father. On the way he met Perry returning from that place, who informed him that his father was not there. Then they went together to Ebrington, a village between Charringworth and Campden, where they were told by a person of the name of Daniel, that Mr. Harrison had called at his house the evening before, on his return from Charringworth, but did not stay. From this place they went to Paxford, about a mile distant, where not being able to obtain any farther intelligence, they returned towards Campden. As they were proceeding homeward, they heard that a hat, a band, and comb had been picked up by a poor woman in the highway between Ebrington and Campden. This was some clew indeed, but of an alarming nature. Accordingly they hastened to find her: she was glean-

ing in the field, and produced these articles, which they knew to have been the property of Mr. Harrison. The hat and comb were hacked and cut, and the band bloody.—She conducted them also to the place where she found these things, in the highway between Ebrington and Campden, near to a great furze-brake: there they searched for him, supposing him to have been murdered; but no traces were to be observed, and nothing more could be found.

The tidings soon reached Campden, and universal was the alarm of the town. Numbers ran eagerly to the spot, to search for the supposed dead body, but in vain. Mrs. Harrison's fears for her husband were now painfully increased. The circumstances of her having sent Perry to meet his master, and his not returning that night, raised a suspicion, that he had robbed and murdered him. In consequence of this, Perry was apprehended the next day, and brought before a justice of the peace, by whom he was examined concerning the absence of his master, and

his own conduct in staying out all the night, when he was dispatched in search of him. This is the substance of the account he then gave:—He said, that his mistress sent him, between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, to meet his master. When he had gone towards Charringworth, about a land's length down Campden field, he met with one William Reed, of Campden, and acquainted him with his errand; but told him, that he was afraid to go farther, as darkness was coming on; he would therefore return, and mount his young master's horse; so they both went to Mr. Harrison's court-gate, where they parted. Presently one Pierce came by, who attended him about the distance of a bow-shot into the fields, when the same irresolution again overpowered him, and he returned with his companion to his master's gate, where they also parted. He then went into a hen-roost belonging to the house, where he lay about an hour, but did not sleep; and no sooner

had the clock struck twelve, than he went out, and proceeded towards Charringworth; but so thick a mist arose, that he lost his way, and passed the rest of the night under a hedge. At daybreak, on Friday morning, he went to Charringworth, where he inquired for his master of one Edward Plaister, who told him, that he had been with him on the preceding afternoon, and received twenty-three pounds of him, but did not stay long. He next went to the house of William Curtis, of the same town, who told him, that he had heard of his master having called upon him the day before; but he did not see him, as he was not at home.—It was now about five o'clock in the morning, and he was returning to Campden, when on the way he met his master's son, with whom he went to Ebrington and Paxford, as has been related before.

The other parties were then examined; and Reed, Pierce, Plaister, and Curtis confirmed the evidence, by declaring what Perry had said concerning them to be true. He was asked by the ma-

gistrate, how he, who was afraid to go to Charringworth at nine o'clock, became so bold as to go thither at twelve? He answered, that at nine o'clock it was dark, but at twelve the moon shone. Then the question was put to him, why, returning twice home, and staying till twelve o'clock, he did not enter the house, to know whether his master were come home, before he went in search of him a third time? His reply was, that he knew his master was not come home, because he saw a light in his chamber-window, which never used to be there so late when he was at home. But the answers of Perry not being sufficiently satisfactory to the justice, he was ordered back into custody, and was detained, sometimes in an inn at Campden, and sometimes in the common prison, from Saturday, August the 18th, to the Friday following. During this time he was reexamined before the same magistrate at Campden, but confessed nothing more than before; nor at that time

could any farther discovery be made of the absent man. What was become of Mr. Harrison still remained a mystery.

During his confinement he gave several contradictory accounts:—To some, who pressed him to confess what he knew concerning his master, he said, that a tinker had killed him; to others, that he and a gentleman's servant of the neighbourhood had robbed and murdered him; and to others, that he was murdered, and hid in a bean-rick at Campden, where search was made for him, but to no purpose. At length he said, that he had something of great importance to communicate to the magistrate; and if he were again carried before him, he would discover that to him, which he would not reveal to any other person.

On the 24th of August he was again brought up for examination before the same justice, who asked him, whether he would now confess what was become of his master. "He was murdered," said he, "but not by me."—"If you know

this to be the case," replied the justice, "you know also the persons, by whom he was murdered."—This he acknowledged; and being urged to confess what he knew concerning the affair, affirmed, that the murderers were his mother and his brother.—When he had made this confession, the justice advised him to consider well what he asserted:—"I fear," said he, "that, after all, you yourself are guilty of the death of your master: beware how you draw more innocent blood upon your head; for the charge, which you have brought against your mother and brother, may cost them their lives."—But he persisted with equal solemnity in protesting, that he had spoken nothing but the truth, and that he should hold no other language, if he were immediately to die. The justice then desired him to declare the circumstances of the murder; and he told the following story:—

He said, that his mother and his brother had solicited him with frequent impor-

tunity, ever since he had engaged in the service of his master, to procure them money. They told him how poor they were, and that it was in his power to relieve them; for, if he would give them notice when his master went to receive the rents for lady Campden, they would waylay and rob him. Accordingly, on the Thursday morning, when his master was gone to Charringworth, being sent upon an errand into the town, he met his brother in the street, and telling him where Mr. Harrison was gone, added, that he might have his money, if he would lie in wait for him upon the road. In the evening, when Mrs. Harrison sent him in search of his master, he had no sooner passed through the gate into the street, than he again met his brother, going, as he said, to accomplish his purpose; they accompanied each other to the churchyard, about a stone's throw from the gate, where they parted, he walking on the path across the churchyard, and his brother continuing on the road round

the church: but in the highway beyond the churchyard they met again, and went together on the road leading to Charringworth. About a bow-shot from Campden church was a gate, opening into a ground belonging to lady Campden, called the Conygree; which, to those who had a key to go through the garden, was the nearest way from that place to Mr. Harrison's house. When they came near to this gate, it was so dark, that they could not discern any man so as to know him; but he perceived some one going into that ground, and, as he knew there was no way but for those who had a key, concluded that it was Mr. Harrison: so he told his brother, that he believed his master was actually just gone in the Conygree, and if he followed him he might have the money. He agreed in the mean time to walk awhile in the fields, and then, following his brother about the middle of the Conygree, found his master upon the ground, his brother upon him, and his mother standing by.—Here

he was interrupted, and asked, whether his master were then dead?—He answered, that he was not; for, after he came to them, his master exclaimed, "Ah, rogues, will you kill me?"—At this moment he interceded with his brother, and said, he hoped he would not kill his master. "Peace, peace, you are a fool," replied the other; and immediately strangling him, rifled his pocket of a bag of money, and threw it into his mother's lap. The next step, that he and his brother took, was to carry the dead body into the garden adjoining to the Conygree; where, after consulting what they should do with it, they agreed to throw it into the great sink, by Wallington's mill, behind the garden; but they bade him go up to the court, next the house, to listen whether any one was stirring, and said, they would throw the body into the sink. —Here he was interrupted again, and asked, whether it was there.—He replied, that indeed he did not know; for he returned to them no more, but went to the

court-gate, which opens into the town. Here he met with John Pierce, with whom he went into the field, and again returned with him to his master's gate. After this, he went into the hen-roost, where he lay until twelve o'clock that night, but could not sleep. When he parted with his mother and brother, he brought away with him his master's hat-band and comb, which he laid in the hen-roost; but, at this hour going out again, he carried this hatband and comb, and, cutting them three or four times with his knife, threw them into the high-way, where afterwards the gleaner found them.—Here the prisoner was asked his reason for this measure.—He said, he did it, that it might be believed his master had been robbed and murdered upon that spot; and having thus disposed of these articles, he proceeded to Charring-worth, and the other villages, according to the account given before.

Upon this singular confession, the justice issued orders, that Joan and

Richard Perry, the mother and brother, should be apprehended, and that the sink should be searched where the corpse of Mr. Harrison was said to be thrown. To the general astonishment, the sink afforded nothing, that could in the slightest degree lead to a discovery. With equal success the fish-pools in Campden were drawn and searched: nothing could be found. Some persons suggested, that the body might be hid in the ruins of Campden-house; it had been burnt in the late unfortunate civil war, and was by no means unfit for the purpose of such a concealment. In this season of perplexity any opinion, that carried along with it a share of probability, was worthy of attention; the ruins were therefore diligently searched;—but all in vain.

On the ensuing day, Joan and Richard and John Perry were brought before the justice. The two former were told what John had laid to their charge; but they denied the whole, and uttered many imprecations on themselves, if they

were in the least guilty of any one circumstance of which they had been accused. With the most undaunted assurance, John, on the other hand, affirmed, in their presence, that he had spoken nothing but the truth, and that they had murdered his master; enumerating various facts already related, particularly their teasing him for money. Richard confessed, that he me this brother that morning, and spoke with him; but nothing passed between them upon the subject of money; and both he and the mother told John he was a villain, to accuse them in this manner. But John, continuing unshaken, affirmed, face to face, that he had spoken nothing but the truth, and would justify it to his death.

As the prisoners were returning from the magistrate's house to Campden, a remarkable circumstance happened, which served to strengthen the accusation at that time, and was afterward sworn upon the evidence at their trial. John

walked at some distance before Richard Perry. The latter pulling a handkerchief out of his pocket, drew out with it a ball of inkle, which dropped to the ground. One of his guard taking it up, he desired him to restore it, and said it was only his wife's hair-lace; but the guard, from a spirit of curiosity, opened it, and finding a slip-knot at the end, went and showed it to John, who was totally ignorant of the affair. As soon as he saw it, and was asked whether he knew it, he shook his head, and replied, "Yes, to my sorrow; for that is the very string, with which my brother strangled my master."

Another circumstance it is also necessary to mention. On the preceding year, 1659, the house of Mr. Harrison was broken open, between eleven and twelve o'clock at noon, upon Campden market-day, whilst himself and all his family were at the lecture held in the church; a ladder had been raised to a window of the second story, from which an iron bar had

been wrenched with a ploughshare, which was left in the room; one hundred and forty pounds in money were carried away; but the perpetrators of the robbery could never be discovered. However, some time after this, and indeed not many weeks before the absence of Mr. Harrison, his servant Perry, one evening, in Campden garden, yelled in a most hideous manner. Some persons, attracted by so unusual an outcry, repaired to the place, where they met him running, with a sharp pick in his hand, and apparently in great alarm. He told them a formal story, that he had been assaulted by two men in white, with drawn swords, and that he defended himself with his sheep-pick. The handle of it was certainly cut in two or three places; and marks of violence were visible upon a key in his pocket, which he attributed to one of their swords.—The magistrate, upon Perry's confession, had called this affair to mind, and questioned him concerning this robbery:—"When your master lost one hun-

dred and forty pounds out of his house at noon-day," said he to Perry, "do you know who stole it?"—"Yes," said Perry, "it was my brother."—"Were you then with him?"—"No, I was at church, but I gave him information of the money, told him in which room it was, and where he might have a ladder to reach the window;—my brother afterward informed me that he had the money in his possession, and had buried it in his garden:—at next Michaelmas we were to have divided it."—Nothing could be more positive than this assertion: in consequence of it the garden had been searched; but no money could be found.

In the course of the ensuing month the assizes were held at Gloucester, when two indictments were found against John, Richard, and Joan Perry; one for breaking into the house of William Harrison, and robbing him of one hundred and forty pounds in the year one thousand six hundred and fifty nine; the other for robbing and murdering the said

William Harrison on the 16th day of August, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty. To the first indictment they pleaded "not guilty;" but some persons, who were unwilling to lose time, and trouble the court with their trial, prompted them to plead guilty, and entreat the benefit of the king's pardon, and act of oblivion then in force. They complied with this suggestion, and obtained pardon; but at the hour of their death they denied that they had committed the robbery, or knew any thing of the affair. John Perry, being upon this occasion questioned in court concerning his being assaulted in the garden, confessed, that it was a mere fiction; that, entertaining the design of robbing his master, he put this stratagem into execution, that the charge might fall upon some unknown robbers. Upon the last indictment judge Turner refused to try them, because the body was not yet found.

At the spring assizes in the following

year, the prisoners were however tried by judge Hyde, upon the indictment of murder. They pleaded not guilty. The declaration of John before the justice was proved by several witnesses, who were present at the time of his confession; but in his defence he alleged, that he was then mad, and knew not what he said. The other two protested, that they were totally innocent of the crime, and that they knew nothing of the death or absence of Mr. Harrison. Richard said, that his brother had accused others also of the murder of his master; and for the truth of this assertion appealed to the witnesses who were present, to the satisfaction of the judge. But the jury, after a short consultation, found them all three guilty, and they received sentence of death. A few days after, they were conducted to the place of execution, on Broadway hill, within sight of Campden, and there they suffered in the presence of a great concourse of people. The mother, according to the credulity of the

age, was deemed a witch, and supposed to have so bewitched her sons, that they could confess nothing, while she was alive: therefore she was first executed. But this did not lead to a discovery of the mystery. Next, Richard, as he stood upon the ladder, professed, with undiminished constancy, that he was altogether innocent of the fact for which he was about to die; but, in a most affecting and earnest manner, he besought his brother, for the satisfaction of his own conscience, and of all mankind, to disclose what he knew concerning Mr. Harrison. The other remained unmoved by his entreaty; and told the populace with a sullen air, that he was not obliged to confess to them: yet, immediately before he was turned off, though he persisted to declare, that he knew nothing of the death of his master, or what was become of him, he told them, that *they might possibly know hereafter.*

This singular prediction was amply verified by the extraordinary return of

Mr. Harrison, several months after, to the surprise of the whole country. We shall subjoin the exact copy of a letter, which he himself wrote to sir Thomas Overbury, for the express purpose of relating this affair.

" Honoured sir,

" In obedience to your commands, I give you this true account of my being carried away beyond the seas, my continuance there, and return home.

" On a Thursday in the afternoon, in harvest time, I went to Charringworth, to demand rents for my lady Campden; at which time the tenants were busy in the fields, and late ere they came home, which occasioned my stay there till the close of the evening. I expected a considerable sum, but received only 28 *l.* and no more. On my return home, in the narrow passage among Ebrington furzes, there met me one horseman, who said, 'Art thou there?' And I, fearing he would have ridden over me, smote his horse upon the nose; whereupon he

struck at me with his sword several blows, and ran it into my side; while I, with my little cane, defended myself as well as I could: at last another came behind me, and ran me through the thigh, then laid hold of the collar of my doublet, and drew me to a hedge, soon after which a third came up: they did not take my money, but mounting me behind one of them, drew my arms about his middle, and fastened my wrists together with something that had a spring-lock to it, as I conceived, by hearing it snap as they put it on; they then threw a great cloak over me, and carried me away; in the night they alighted at a hay-rick which stood near to a stone-pit, by a wall-side, where they took away my money, about two hours before day, as I heard one of them tell the other he thought it to be then, and tumbled me into the stone-pit; they staid, as I thought, about an hour at the hay-rick, when they took horse again; one of them bade me come out of the pit; I answered,

they had my money already, and what would they do with me?—whereupon one of them struck me again, drew me out, and put a great quantity of money into my pockets, mounting me again, after the same manner as before.

"On the Friday, about sun-set, they took me to a lone house upon a heath, by a thicket of bushes, where they dismounted me, almost dead, being greatly bruised with the carriage of the money. When the woman saw that I could neither stand nor speak; she asked them, whether or no they had brought a dead man?—They answered, No; but a friend that was hurt, and that they were carrying him to a surgeon.—She answered, if they did not make haste, their friend would be dead, before they could bring him to one. They laid me on cushions, and suffered none to come into the room but a little girl. Here we staid all night, they giving me some broth and strong waters: in the morning, very early, they mounted me as before, and on Saturday

night they brought me to a place where stood two or three houses, in one of which I lay all night on cushions by their bed-side. On Sunday morning they carried me from thence, and about three or four o'clock, they brought me to a place by the seaside, called Deal, where they laid me down on the ground. Here, whilst one of them staid beside me, the other two walked a little way off, to meet a man with whom they talked: in their discourse I heard them mention seven pounds; after which they went away together, and in about half an hour returned. The man, whose name, as I afterward heard, was Wrenshaw, said, he feared I should die before he could get me on board.

"Soon after, they put me into a boat, and carried me on ship-board, where my wounds were dressed. I remained in the ship, as near as I can reckon, about six weeks, in which time I was tolerably well recovered of my wounds and weakness.—One day the master of the ship

came and told me, and the rest of the people in the vessel, that he discovered three Turkish ships. We all offered to fight in defence of the ship and ourselves; but he commanded us to keep close, and said, he did not doubt, if it were an enemy, we should be able to conquer them. A short time after this he called us all up; and when we came upon the deck, we saw two Turkish ships close by us; into one of these we were put, and confined in a dark hole, where I know not how long we continued, before we were landed. As soon however as we were landed, they led us two days journey, and put us into a great house or prison, where we remained four days and a half, and then came to us eight men to view us, who seemed to be officers: they called us, and examined us concerning our trades and callings, which every one answered: one said he was a surgeon; another, that he was a broad-cloth weaver; and I, after two or three demands, said I had some skill in physic. We three were set

aside, and taken by three of those eight men that came to view us. It was my chance to be chosen by a grave physician of eighty-seven years of age, who lived near to Smyrna; he had formerly been in England, and knew Crowland in Lincolnshire, which he preferred to all other places in England. He employed me to keep his still-house, and gave me a silver bowl, double-gilt, to drink in: my business was most in that place: once he set me to gather cotton wool, which I not doing to his mind, he struck me to the ground, and afterward drew his stiletto to stab me; but, I holding my hand to him, he gave a stamp and turned from me. I was there about a year and three quarters, when, my master falling sick on a Thursday, he sent for me; and calling me, as he used, by the name of Boll, told me he should die, and bade me shift for myself.—He died on the Saturday following; and I presently hastened with my bowl to a port almost a day's journey distant; the way to which place I knew,

having been twice there employed by my master about the carriage of his cotton-wool. When I came thither, I addressed myself to two men who came out of a Hamburgh ship, which, as they said, was bound to Portugal within three or four days. I inquired of them for an English ship: they answered, there were none. I entreated them to take me into their ship: they answered they durst not, for fear of being discovered by the searchers, which might occasion the forfeiture, not only of their goods, but also of their lives.

"I was very importunate with them, but could not prevail; they left me to depend on Providence, who at length sent another out of the same ship, to whom I made known my condition, craving his assistance for my transportation: he made me the like answer to the former, and was as stiff in his denial, till the sight of my bowl put him to a pause: he returned to the ship, and after half an hour's space, coming back again accompanied by another seaman, undertook for

my bowl to transport me; but told me, I must be content to lie down in the keel, and endure much hardship, which I was content to do, to gain my liberty. They then took me on board, and put me below in the vessel in a very uneasy place, where I was concealed with boards and other things, and lay undiscovered, notwithstanding the strict search that was made in the vessel. My two chapmen, who had my bowl, honestly furnished me with victuals daily, until we arrived at Lisbon in Portugal; where, as soon as the master had left the ship, and was gone into the city, they set me on shore, moneyless, to shift for myself. I knew not what course to take; but, as Providence led me, I went up into the city, and entered a good street; where, being weary, I turned my back to a wall, and leaned upon my staff.

" Opposite to me were four gentlemen discoursing together. After a while, one of them came, and spoke to me in a language that I did not understand. I

told him I was an Englishman, and understood not what he spake: he answered me in plain English, that he understood me, and was himself born near Wisbeach, in Cambridgeshire. I then related to him my case; and he taking compassion on me, engaged with the master of a ship bound for England, for my passage, who landed me safe at Dover; thence I made shift to get to London, where being furnished with necessaries, I came into the country.

"Thus, honoured sir, I have given you a true account of my great sufferings, and happy deliverance, by the mercy and goodness of God, to whom be given all honour, praise and glory. I conclude and rest,

"Yours,

"WILLIAM HARRISON."

The substance of what has been already related, together with this letter, was sent by sir Thomas Overbury to doctor Shirley, accompanied by the following note:—

" Sir,

" It has not been any neglect in me, that you have no sooner heard from me, but my unhappy distemper seizing on my right hand soon after my coming down into the country; so that till now I have been wholly deprived of the use of it. I have herewith sent you a short narrative of that no less strange than unhappy business, which some years since happened in my neighbourhood; the truth of every particular whereof I am able to attest, and I think it may very well be reckoned among the most remarkable occurrences of this age; you may dispose of it as you please; and in whatsoever else I can serve you, you may freely command me, as, sir,

" Your affectionate kinsman,
and humble servant,
" Thomas Overbury."

These letters are not exhibited as models of epistolary composition, but as

authentic documents, to establish the story. Sir Thomas Overbury and doctor Shirley were well known, and by no means likely to impose upon the world in this affair; which was indeed the topic of much conversation in those days. The opinions of men upon this singular chain of events were, and will continue to be, very various; but every solution that has been attempted seems liable to objection. Choose any explanation that you please, still there appears to exist a wonder. Many questioned the truth of Harrison's account of himself, and his transportation, believing he was never out of England; but it is very certain, that Perry told a formal false story to hang himself, his mother, and his brother: and since this appears no less incredible than the other, it may induce us to suspend our thoughts of Harrison, lest we should dispute his veracity with injustice. That he was absent from his habitation, employment, and relations, for two years, does not admit of the smallest doubt. If

he were not carried away, according to his own affirmation, no reason can be given for his absence; because he had always lived very happily in the service of the noble family, to which he had then been attached above fifty years; he had obtained the reputation of a faithful servant, and had constantly proved himself to be a man of a virtuous life and manners. Such a person, therefore, could not reasonably be thought, in his old age, to have voluntarily forsaken his wife, his children, and his stewardship, leaving behind him, as was actually the case, a considerable sum of lady Campden's money in his house. We cannot but believe, that he was carried away by force:—still the question remains, by whom, or at whose instigation, was this effected?—Those by whom, according to his own account, it was done, he declared that he never saw before; and that he saw neither his servant Perry, nor his mother, nor his brother, on the evening when he was carried away.

Among other conjectures, it was suspected, that Harrison was treated in this manner at the instigation of his eldest son; and that the hopes of the stewardship, to which he afterward succeeded, might induce him to contrive the removal of his father. But can it be imagined, for the honour of humanity, that the son should be well acquainted with his transportation, consequently with the innocency of these unhappy persons, and yet prosecute them to death in so determined a manner; that, when they were condemned, he in particular should cause them to be conveyed above twenty miles to suffer near Campden?—that he should procure John Perry to be hanged in chains, in such a situation that he might cast his eyes upon him every day?—that he himself should stand at the foot of the ladder during the execution?—After all, why did John Perry by his oaths and assertions take away the lives of his mother and brother? Why, if he knew the truth, was he so unwilling to declare it? Even supposing

him to have been an accomplice with the son, who wished to remove him from the world; is it likely, that Perry, merely as his engine, should in this manner rush headlong to death in such a cause, when confession might have saved him?— Reflections such as these, as they make it improbable that the son should be privy to the transportation of his father, so they render the whole matter dark and mysterious. We must leave it to that being, who alone knoweth all things:—unsolved it will probably remain to the end of time.

Upon the spot where the principal circumstances took place, the memory of them is still preserved: it is handed down from father to son: many an open-mouthed stranger has the traditionary tale surprised; and the natives, with mingled astonishment and pride, have called it the CAMPDEN WONDER.

TALE VII.

THE MYSTERIOUS LETTERS.

AMONG other transactions, that distinguish the history of Great Britain, scarcely a year glides away without producing some incident, that strongly marks the singular character of the English nation. —Towards the end of November in the year 1757, the duke of Marlborough received, by the post, a letter of a very extraordinary nature. It was directed "To his grace the duke of Marlborough, with care and speed;"—The contents were as follows:—

"My lord,

"As ceremony is an idle thing upon most occasions, more especially to persons in my state of mind, I shall proceed immediately to acquaint you with the motive and end of addressing this epistle to

you, which is equally interesting to us both. You are to know then, that my present situation in life is such, that I should prefer annihilation to a continuance in it. Desperate diseases require desperate remedies; and you are the man I have pitched upon either to make me or unmake yourself. As I never had the honour to live among the great, the tenour of my proposals will not be very courtly; but let that be an argument to enforce a belief of what I am now going to write.—It has employed my invention for some time to find out a method of destroying another without exposing my own life: that I have accomplished, and defy the law.—Now for the application of it.—I am desperate, and must be provided for. You have it in your power; it is my business to make it your inclination to serve me, which you must determine to comply with, by procuring me a genteel support for my life, or your own will be at a period, before this session of Parliament is over. I have more motives

than one for singling you out upon this occasion; and I give you this fair warning, because the means I shall make use of are too fatal, to be eluded by the power of physic. If you think this of any consequence, you will not fail to meet the author on Sunday next, at ten in the morning, or on Monday (if the weather should be rainy on Sunday) near the first tree beyond the style in Hyde park, in the foot-walk to Kensington. Secresy and compliance may preserve you from a double danger of this sort, as there is a certain part of the world, where your death has more than been wished for upon other motives. I know the world too well to trust this secret in any breast but my own. A few days determine me your friend or enemy. "FELTON *.

"You will apprehend, that I mean you should be alone; and depend upon

* The name of the assassin who stabbed the duke of Buckingham.

it, that a discovery of any artifice in this affair will be fatal to you. My safety is insured by my silence, for confession only can condemn me."

The duke, in compliance with this strange remonstrance, appeared at the time and place appointed, on horseback and alone, with pistols before him, and the star of his order displayed, that he might be the more easily known. He had likewise taken the precaution of engaging a friend to attend in the park, at such a distance, however, as scarce to be observable. He continued some time on the spot, without seeing any person he could suspect of having written the letter, and then rode away.

When he had reached Hyde park corner, chancing to turn his head, he perceived a man standing at the bridge, and looking at the water, within twenty yards of the tree, which was described in the letter. He immediately rode back at a gentle pace, and passing by the person

expected to be addressed; but as no advance of this kind was made, he, in repassing, bowed to the stranger, and asked if he had not something to communicate?—The man replying, "No, I don't know you;" the duke told him his name, adding, "Now you know me, I imagine you have something to say to me." But he still answered in the negative, and the duke rode home.

In a day or two after this transaction, another letter was brought to him, couched in these terms:—

"My lord,

"You receive this as an acknowledgement of your punctuality as to the time and place of meeting on Sunday last, though it was owing to you it answered no purpose. The pageantry of being armed, and the ensign of your order, were useless, and too conspicuous. You needed no attendant, the place was not calculated for mischief, nor was any intended.

If you walk in the west aisle of Westminster abbey, towards eleven o'clock on Sunday next, your sagacity will point out the person whom you will address, by asking his company to take a turn or two with you. You will not fail, on inquiry, to be acquainted with his name and place of abode. According to which direction you will please to send two or three hundred pound bank-notes the next day by the penny-post. Exert not your curiosity too early: it is in your power to make me grateful on certain terms. I have friends who are faithful, but they do not bark before they bite.

"I am, &c.

"F."

The duke, determining, if possible, to unveil this mystery, repaired to the abbey at the time prescribed; and, after having walked up and down for five or six minutes, saw the very same person, to whom he had spoken in Hyde park, enter

the abbey, with another man of a creditable appearance. This last, after they had viewed some of the monuments, went into the choir; and the other, turning back, advanced towards the duke, who, accosting him, asked him if he had any thing to say to him, or any commands for him?—He replied,—"No, my lord, I have not."—"Sure you have," said the duke; but he persisted in his denial. Then the duke, leaving him, took several turns in the aisle, while the stranger walked on the other side.—But nothing farther passed between them; and although the duke had provided several persons in disguise to apprehend the delinquent, he forbore giving the signal, that, notwithstanding appearances, he might run no risque of injuring an innocent person.

Not long after this second disappointment, he received a third letter, to the following effect:—

"My lord,

"I am fully convinced you had a companion on Sunday: I interpret it as owing to the weakness of human nature; but such proceeding is far from being ingenuous, and may produce bad effects, whilst it is impossible to answer the end proposed. You will see me again soon, as it were by accident, and may easily find where I go to; in consequence of which, by being sent to, I shall wait on your grace, but expect to be quite alone, and to converse in whispers; you will likewise give your honour, upon meeting, that no part of the conversation shall transpire. These and the former terms complied with, insure your safety; my revenge, in case of noncompliance (or any scheme to expose me) will be slower, but not less sure; and strong suspicion the utmost that can possibly ensue upon it, while the chances would be tenfold against you. You will possibly be in doubt after the meeting; but it is

quite necessary the outside should be a mask to the in. The family of the Bloods* is not extinct, though they are not in my scheme."

The expression, "You will see me again soon, as it were by accident," seemed to point at the person to whom he had spoken in the park, and in the abbey; nevertheless, he saw him not again, nor did he hear any thing farther of the affair for two months, at the expiration of which the post brought him this letter:—

"May it please your grace,

"I have reason to believe, that the son of one Barnard, a surveyor, in Abingdon-buildings, Westminster, is acquainted with some secrets, that nearly concern your safety: his father is now out of town,

* The name of the desperate adventurer, who in 1670 attempted to seize and carry off the duke of Ormond. Afterward he endeavoured to steal the crown from the Tower of London.

which will give you an opportunity of questioning him more privately; it would be useless to your grace, as well as dangerous to me, to appear more publickly in this affair.

"Your sincere friend,

"ANONYMOUS.

"He frequently goes to Storey's-gate coffeehouse."

In about a week after this intimation was received, the duke sent a person to the coffeehouse, to inquire for Mr. Barnard, and tell him he would be glad to speak to him. The message was delivered, and Barnard declared he would wait upon his grace next Thursday, at half an hour after ten in the morning. He was punctual to his appointment, and no sooner appeared, than the duke recognised him to be the person, to whom he had spoken in the park and the abbey. Having conducted him into an apartment, and shut the door, he asked, as before, if he had any thing to communicate; and was an-

swered, as formerly, in the negative.—Then the duke repeated every circumstance of this strange transaction; to which Barnard listened with attention and surprise, yet without exhibiting any marks of conscious guilt or confusion. The duke observing, that it was matter of astonishment, to see letters of such import written with the correctness of a scholar; the other replied, that a man might be very poor and very learned at the same time. When he saw the fourth letter, in which his name was mentioned, with the circumstance of his father's absence, he said, "It is very odd, my father was then out of town." An expression the more remarkable, as the letter was without date, and he could not, as an innocent man, be suppposed to know at what time it was written; unless indeed, which does not appear, the duke had inadvertently mentioned the time when it came to his hand.—When he was made acquainted with the particulars, the duke told him, that if he were innocent, he

ought to use his endeavours to detect the writer of the letters, especially of the last, in which he was expressly named. To this admonition he returned no other answer but a smile, and then withdrew.

Soon after he was taken into custody, and tried at the Old Bailey, for sending a threatening letter, contrary to the statute; but no evidence could be found to prove the letters were of his handwriting; nor did any presumption appear against him, except his being in Hyde park, and in Westminster abbey, at the time and place appointed in the first two letters.—On the other hand, Mr. Barnard proved, that on the Sunday, when he saw the duke in Hyde park, he was on his way to Kensington, on particular business, by his father's order, signified to him that very morning;—that he accordingly went thither, and dined with his uncle, in company with several other persons, to whom he related what had passed between the duke of Marlborough and him in the

park;—that his being afterward in Westminster abbey was the effect of mere accident;—that Mr. James Greenwood, his kinsman, who had lain the preceding night at his father's house, desired him to dress himself, that they might walk together in the park; and he did not comply with his request till after much solicitation;—that he proposed to enter the park without passing through the abbey, but was prevailed upon by Mr. Greenwood, who expressed a desire of seeing the newly erected monument of General Hargrave;—that as he had formerly communicated to his friend the strange circumstance of the duke's speaking to him in Hyde park, Mr. Greenwood no sooner saw that nobleman in the abbey, than he gave notice to Mr. Barnard, who was very short-sighted;—and that, from his passing them several times, concluding he wanted to speak with Mr. Barnard alone, he quitted him, and retired into the choir, that they might commune together without interruption. It likewise appeared,

from undoubted evidence, that Barnard had often mentioned openly, to his friends and acquaintance, the circumstances of what passed between him and the duke, in the park and in the abbey;—that his father was a man of unblemished reputation, and in affluent circumstances;—that he himself was never reduced to any want, or such exigence as might impel him to any desperate methods of obtaining money;—that his fidelity had been often tried, and his life always irreproachable. For these reasons he was acquitted of the crime laid to his charge, and the mystery remains undiscovered to this day.

After all, the author of the letters does not seem to have had any real design to extort money, because the scheme was very ill calculated for that purpose, and, indeed, could not possibly take effect, without the most imminent risque of detection. Perhaps his aim was nothing more than to gratify a petulance and peculiarity of humour, by alarming the

duke, exciting the curiosity of the public, puzzling the multitude, and giving rise to a thousand ridiculous conjectures: (at any rate, there would be a degree of wanton cruelty in this, which it is impossible to palliate.) If any thing more were intended, and the duke earnestly desired to know the extent of the scheme, he might, when he closetted the person suspected, have encouraged him to a declaration, by promising inviolable secrecy on his word and honour, in which any man would have confided as a sacred obligation.—However, in the course of this year the duke died;—and it is somewhat singular, that this event was never attributed to the secret practices of his incendiary correspondent, who had given him to understand, that his vengeance, though slow, would not be the less sure.

Few ages exist without a wonder. History is continually unfolding them upon a larger scale. There, in the lapse of time, we meet successively with the

wonders of superstition, or impiety, or wild extravagance in the manners of mankind. These, from their frequency, do not strike us so forcibly as a few marvellous facts, in which not many individuals are concerned.—Here is one of those problematical events, which entirely elude the force of evidence, and in which conjecture is all that can be advanced. Elucidation is not to be expected. Upon such occasions the general curiosity is excited, only to be disappointed, when circumstances combine to baffle the most diligent examination.

The conclusions to be drawn from such events are neither useless nor remote. Human reason has it's bounds, and when we lose sight of our own weakness we lose sight of our power. Humility is assuredly the garb, that best becomes us:—mortals should cease to be haughty from a conceit of their penetration and infallibility, adoring the superintending wisdom of the omniscient

Deity, embracing his offers, and walking in his laws.

Reader, solve, if thou canst, the mystery of this tale;—and let him who is acquainted with a series of facts, equally marvellous and true, relate them to puzzle the reason, and mortify the pride of man.

TALE VIII.

IVAN THE THIRD.

JUST where the Neva flows out of the lake Ladoga, is a small island occupied by the fortress of Schlusselburg *. It is in the antique form, with high walls and vaulted ramparts, and being used for the confinement of state prisoners, is only inhabited by the garrison. Here, in

* Schlussel in German signifies a key. This name was given it by Peter the First, as being the key to his new city, Petersburg.

1741, was imprisoned Ivan the Third, the infant emperor of Russia.

On running over the series of Russian monarchs, from Alexey Michailovitch downwards, our feelings are at every moment hurt by the intestine disturbances, that have happened from different pretenders to the throne. So many, within so short a space of time, and in general attended with violent shocks, scarcely any princely house in Europe has experienced, especially in modern times. Upon the death of the empress Anne, in 1740, Ivan Antonovitch, her nephew, then in his cradle, was proclaimed her successor, and Biren regent, a man of a proud and ambitious spirit; but this high elevation was only the prelude to a dreadful fall. The father and mother of the young emperor were discontented at seeing themselves excluded from the regency; and the insolence, with which they were treated by Biren, increased their displeasure.—Thirteen months had elapsed, and these animosities continued; when in another quarter a conspiracy broke out, which hurled the helpless Ivan from

the throne, and raised Elizabeth to the sovereign power.

In the first moments of that revolution, the soldiers who entered the apartments of the imperial infant found him asleep, and, rebellious as they were, still they waited respectfully till he should awake, to carry him to Elizabeth: that princess took him up in her arms, and fondly caressed him; when perceiving him to smile at the shouts of "Hourra Elizaveta!" which resounded from the gates of the palace, she could not restrain her pity; saying, "Unhappy child! thou knowest not, alas! that they are the joyful cries of those, that hurl thee from thy throne." The artless smiles of the babe could call forth her unavailing pity, but they could not subdue her ambition. He was doomed with the regent, his mother, and his family, to be shut up in the castle of Schlusselburg: from this place they were soon after conveyed to the citadel of Riga, where they wore away eighteen months of captivity. Their situation was

then changed, but only from prison to prison. From Riga they were transported to the fortress of Dunamunde, and afterward to Oranienburg, a town built by Mentchikoff, in the cold province of Voronetch, at the south-eastern extremity of European Russia. At all these places the miseries of imprisonment were alleviated by being together; but about the latter end of 1746 the family was separated, and the rest being brought more northward to Kolmogor, Ivan was left alone. To his great misfortune, it came into the mind of a monk, who had access to his prison, to carry him off from Oranienburg, intending to conduct him to Germany; in their flight they had reached Smolensk; but there the affair was discovered, and they were detained. Then he was shut up in a monastery, situate in the Valdai, not far from the road that leads from St. Petersburg to Mosco. At length, in 1756, the wretched captive, lately the envied emperor of a quarter of the globe, was brought back to Schlus-

selburg for greater security, and there lodged in the casemate of the fortress, the very loop-hole of which was immediately bricked up. He was never led out into the open air, and no ray of Heaven ever visited his eyes. In this subterranean vault it was necessary to keep a lamp always burning; and as no clock was to be seen or heard, Ivan knew no difference between day and night. His interiour guard, a captain and a lieutenant, were shut up with him; and there was a time when they did not dare to speak to him, not so much as to answer him the simplest question. What wonder if his ignorance should at length border on stupidity?—This dreadful abode was however afterward changed for another, hereafter to be described, in the corridor, under the covered way in the castle.

About this time Elizabeth had a desire to see him, whom with such circumstances of cruelty she had detained from his right. Accordingly he was very secretly conveyed in a covered cart to Pe-

tersburg; where, in the house of Peter Shuvaloff, she had a long conversation with him, but without making herself known. Ivan was then about sixteen, and his person altogether graceful; for he was of a good height, of an interesting figure, with fine hair, and a voice of much sweetness. Elizabeth shed many tears as she talked with him; but that did not save him from being led back to his dismal cell; and her lust of power once more subdued the tenderer feelings of her heart. In this dungeon therefore he lingered until Elizabeth was dead, and the crown devolved upon Peter the Third.

The short reign and sudden end of that unfortunate emperor are well known. —With anxiety all virtuous hearts saw Peter day by day prove more indiscreet, Catharine his wife more ambitious and unfaithful: hence arose that unhappy dissension between them, which to Peter was attended with such fatal consequences, but exalted Catharine to the pinnacle of power. Previous to this the emperor

was determined to repudiate her, and to declare the illegitimacy of Paul Petrovitch, her son by Soltikoff, one of her favourites. Accordingly, in 1762, he looked around for a successor to the throne.

He presently cast his eyes towards Ivan: him he determined to adopt, to declare his successor, and to unite in marriage with the young princess of Holstein-Beck, who was then at Petersburg, and whom he cherished as his daughter. Peter the Third then, with a very few attendants, went privately to the fortress of Schlusselburg, in design of making a visit to Ivan, without discovering himself to him, that he might form a judgment whether he were worthy of the elevated station, which he intended to bestow upon him. The emperor, on this occasion, was attended only by count Leof Alexandrevitch Narishkin his grand ecuyer, baron Ungern-Sternberg, one of his general aides-de-camp, baron Korff, master of the police at Petersburg, and the councellor of state

Volkoff. He was himself furnished with an order, signed in his own hand, in which he enjoined the commandant to give the bearers free leave to walk about the whole fortress, without even excepting the place where Ivan was confined, and to leave them to converse with that prince alone. Peter also took care to conceal the ensigns of his dignity, and to recommend Leof Narishkin, who was tall and of a portly figure, to act so as that he should be taken for the emperor.

But Ivan was not thus deceived.—After contemplating for some time the strangers that entered his cell, he threw himself all at once at the feet of the tzar. "Tzar!" said he, "you are the master here. I shall not importune you with a long petition; but mitigate the severity of my lot. I have been languishing for a number of years in this gloomy dungeon. The only favour I intreat you to grant, is, that I may be permitted, from time to time, to breathe a freer air."—Peter was extremely affected at these words. "Rise,

prince!" said he to Ivan, gently slapping his shoulder; "be under no uneasiness for the future. I will employ all the means in my power, to render your situation more tolerable. But, tell me, prince, have you any recollection of the misfortunes you have experienced from your earlier youth?"—"I have scarcely any idea of those that befel my infancy," replied Ivan; "but from the moment that I began to feel my misery, I have never ceased from mingling my tears with those of my father and my mother, who were miserable solely because of me; and my greatest distress proceeds from the thoughts of the ill treatment they received, as we were transported from one fortress to another." "Hah! whence came that ill treatment?" interrogated the tzar.—"From the officers who conducted us, and who were always the most inhuman of mankind," returned Ivan.—"Do you recollect the names of those officers?" said Peter.—"Alas!" replied the young prince, "we were not very curious to learn them. We were content to

return thanks to Heaven on our bended knees, when these monsters were relieved by officers of a less savage disposition."—"What," said the emperor, "you never fell into the hands of such as had any humanity?"—"Only one deserved to be distinguished from that pack of tigers," answered Ivan: "he gained our esteem, and we lamented the loss of him. His good-nature, his generous attentions, will never depart from my remembrance."—"And you neither know the name of that worthy man?" eagerly asked the tzar.—"Oh, as to him, I remember him very well," replied Ivan; "he was called Korff."—This same baron Korff was one of them that accompained Peter. He melted into tears as he heard these particulars; and the tzar, who was no less affected, took him by the arm, and said, in a broken voice, "Baron, you see how a good action is never lost!"

That he might have time to recover from his emotion, Peter went out with Korff, Narishkin, and Volkoff, leaving

baron Ungern-Sternberg alone with Ivan. —"How then did you come hither, prince?" said Ungern-Sternberg. "Who, returned Ivan, can be guarded and secure against ruffians*? One day, an order from I know not who is brought to the prison where I was with my parents. The ruffians fall upon my family, and tear me from the only persons I knew in the world, and who alone had gained my affection and my confidence: I mean my father and my mother, and my brothers and my sisters. Oh *how I did cry!* and how they themselves, if they be yet alive, must lament the death of their son and their brother!"—"What do you think will be the lot of our new emperor?" asked the baron.—"If I may judge from my idea of the Russians, it will not be more happy than mine. My father and mother have often repeated to me, that foreign princes will always be hated and dethroned by the treacherous and haughty Russians.

* In the original, razboïniks, robbers.

The tzar now reentered, with Narishkin, Korff, Volkoff, and accompanied this time by the commandant, to whom he said in the presence of Ivan; "I order you to give the prince from this moment, all the succours he shall ask, and to allow him at all times to walk and divert himself within the precincts of the fortress. I will send you written orders containing more particulars, by which you are henceforward to regulate your conduct in regard to his sacred person." On coming out of Ivan's chamber, the emperor went over the inside of the fortress; and after having examined a spot that seemed to him proper for the construction of an edifice for conveniently lodging the prisoner, he gave orders to the commandant to set the proper workmen about it, and added; "Let it run in a straight line from one wall to the other of this angle of the fort, so as to form nine rooms in front, and the rest of the space, to the extremity of the angle, may be made into a little garden, with

which he may amuse himself in the air, and find some alleviation of the severity of his confinement. When the building shall be finished, I will come myself and put the prince in possession." Probably the tzar only spoke in this manner to the commandant of Schlusselburg as a blind, to prevent him from surmising his real intentions: for otherwise what need had he to give orders for the construction of a new prison for him, to whom he intended to give the throne? Doubtless, this prison had quite a different object; and it is by no means improbable, that the restless Catharine was the person, for whom it was designed by her husband.

Before he quitted Schlusselburg, Peter went once more into the dungeon of the prince; after this, he returned to Petersburg; where no one entertained a suspicion of the extraordinary interview, that had just passed, and much less of what he was meditating in favour of Ivan. When the prince of Holstein, the emperor's uncle, was informed of the visit

this monarch had made to Ivan, he advised him to send that unfortunate prince into Germany, together with duke Anthony of Brunswick, his father, and the rest of the family. Peter, to avoid raising any suspicions of his plan in the mind of his uncle, pretended to approve of his advice, but for the present he rested satisfied with causing Ivan to be conveyed to the fortress of Kexholm, built on a little isle in the Ladoga lake, and much nearer to the residence than Schlusselburg. It is impossible on this occasion to forbear remarking, what a chain of misfortunes seemed on all sides to encircle this child of adversity: for, as he was rowed from Schlusselburg to get on board the galleot, that was to convey him to Kexholm, the skiff, in which he was, narrowly escaped being lost, by one of the tempests that suddenly rise in summer, and dangerously agitate that stormy, and in many places unfathomable lake; nor would he have escaped a small share of misery if he had found a grave beneath those rolling

waters. But he was reserved for future trials. Peter, after having lodged him at Kexholm, caused him to be secretly conducted to Petersburg, where he was put in a house of no conspicuous figure; in which he visited him during the night, accompanied by Gudovitch and Volkoff: but all his intentions were rendered abortive; for in 1762 another revolution intervened, which removed Peter from the empire and the world, and exalted Catharine to the throne.

Then, when several prisoners were set at liberty; when those who had been banished to the frozen deserts of Siberia, long lingering out their miserable lives amidst those inhospitable wastes, returned, as it were, from the dead, to society and to their friends, neither Ivan nor any of his family were released. Then the humanity of Korff, which first awakened the gratitude of the infant emperor, and was all his life-time remembered with emotion, was the cause of his disgrace. Solely upon account of this

lenity the suspicion of the court fell upon Korff, and he was removed from his office. But the populace, ever mutable, opened their eyes after the unfortunate Peter was no more. They called to mind their prince Ivan. They discovered, that he was in Petersburg on the very day of the revolution; to which city Peter the Third had caused him mysteriously to be brought in the desire of declaring him his successor; and whence Catharine had since, not less mysteriously, had him conveyed to his former prison. They openly said, that it was to that unhappy prince the throne belonged. All ranks of people showed a pity for him. From Schlusselburg he was again conveyed and lodged in a monastery at Kolmogor, not far from Archangel.—She was afraid, that he might suddenly be taken from prison, and crowned.—Here, as though it had been intended to make him more sensible of the misfortune that awaited him, he was treated at first with all the honours that were due to his rank, but was soon,

the sport of capricious malignity, carried back very secretly to Schlusselburg; where he remained in close confinement until the year 1764. In the course of this year an event happened in Russia, in many respects extremely unaccountable, and execrable in itself, although the instigators have been enveloped in a cloud of mystery.

Soon after the commencement of her reign, Catharine had held a conversation with Ivan; as she relates in her manifesto of the 28th of August 1764; in order, according to her own account, to form a judgment of his talents and undestanding. To her great surprise, she declares, she found him to the last degree deficient in both. She observed in him a total privation of sense and reason, with a defect in his utterance, that even had he any thing rational to utter, would have rendered him entirely unintelligible. — All persons, however, were not so thoroughly convinced of the incapacity of the prince. He was now

almost arrived at the age of twenty-four years, and he might evidently be made an instrument, or at least a pretence for exciting dangerous commotions. His just title to the crown, of which he had been formerly in possession, his long sufferings, without any other guilt than that possession and that title, his youth, and even, the obscurity which attended his life, and which therefore gave latitude for conjecture and invention, formed very proper materials for working on the minds of the populace. At the moment when Catharine was taking her departure from Petersburg for Livonia, she had intelligence of fresh conspiracies among the guards. Several persons were taken up: but, experience having shown, that the detection of one conspiracy always encouraged the hatching of some other; and willing to avoid irritating the multitude by the frequency of punishments, the conspirators were proceeded against in private, and many of them were suffered to pine out their miserable lives in prison.

From the depth of his dungeon prince Ivan still continued to afford hopes to those who held in abhorrence the present usurpation. It was for restoring the throne to this unfortunate captive, that a variety of plots were formed. It was for his sake, that men who had never seen him, and whose very existence was utterly unknown to him, were continually braving the scaffold. Faithful to the system of calumny, that had been of such service to the destruction of Peter the Third, the court of Russia incessantly employed it against Ivan. One while it was given out that he was stupid, and incapable of uttering articulate sounds: at another, that he was a drunkard, and as ferocious as a savage. Sometimes it was even pretended, that he was subject to fits of madness, and believed himself a prophet. But to many persons these reports seemed no better than tales invented by the blackest artifice, and afterward innocently propagated by persons, who did not reflect on the numberless

interests that might concur in their invention. Doubtless, Ivan, to whom all instruction was denied, could not have acquired any considerable intellectual improvement: it has indeed been affirmed, that a German officer, who for some time had the custody of him, clandestinely taught him to read; yet, being kept shut up in a loathsome prison, restrained from the converse of any human being from whom he could derive information, he must necessarily have been of a very confined understanding: but there is still a great distance between ignorance, and imbecility, or madness. What evidently proves, that Ivan was neither mad nor stupid is, in the first place, the conversation that he had at count Schuvaloff's in 1756 with the empress Elizabeth. Not only the graces of his figure, and the accents of his voice, but the moving complaints he uttered, awakened the sensibility of all who were present, and even drew from the empress abundance of tears. If that young prince

had committed some act of lunacy, would it have failed of publication?—Again, afterward even his good sense and his sensibility appeared in the discourse which he held to Peter the Third, when he saw him, for the first time, at Schlusselburg. Peter talked with him several times afterward, and persisted in his intention of declaring him his heir. Now it may well be imagined, that Volkoff, Gudovitch, and his other confidants, would have dissuaded him from it, if they could have brought themselves to imagine Ivan to be for ever unfit to wear the crown. But, after all, whatever might be the character of that prince, the daring attempts that were repeatedly made in his favour did not render him less formidable to Catharine, and to the tranquillity of the empire.

An instrument was soon found to put him out of the way of being any disturbance to either.—The regiment of Smolensk was in garrison in the town of Schlusselburg; and a company of about

a hundred men guarded the fortress, in which prince Ivan was confined. In this regiment, as second lieutenant, was an officer named Vassily Mirovitch, whose grandfather had been implicated in the rebellion of the Kozac Mazeppa, and had fought under Charles the Twelfth against Peter the great. The estates of the family of Mirovitch had accordingly been forfeited to the crown. This young man, who had a good share of ambition, preferred with warmth his pretensions to have them restored; and this it was, that made him known at court. The family estates were not given back; but he was continually flattered with the hopes of their recovery, if he would show himself active in securing the tranquillity of the empire.

The inner guard placed over the imperial prisoner consisted at this time of two officers, captain Vlassief and lieutenant Tchekin, who slept with him in his cell. These had a discretionary order, signed by the empress, by which they

were enjoined to put the unhappy prince to death, on any insurrection that might be made in his favour, on the presumption that it could not otherwise be quelled.

The door of Ivan's prison opened under a sort of low arcade, which together with it formed the thickness of the castle-wall within the ramparts; in this arcade or corridor eight soldiers usually kept guard; as well on his account, as because the several vaults on a line with his contained stores of various kinds for the use of the fortress. The other soldiers were in the guard-house, at the gate of the castle, and at their proper stations. The detachment had for it's commander an officer, who himself was under the orders of the governor.

It has been asserted, that, some time before the execution of his project, Mirovitch had opened himself to a lieutenant of the regiment of Veliki Luki, named Uschakoff; and that Uschakoff bound himself by an oath, which he took at the

altar of the church of St. Mary of Kasan in Petersburg, to aid him in the enterprise to the best of his power. But, as the latter was drowned, a few days after this is said to have happened, whilst he was assisting at the launch of a vessel, it is impossible to ascertain the fact.—It is more apparent, that he talked in vague terms of the conspiracy with one of the valets of the court, and that he mentioned it afterward to Simeon Tschevarideff, lieutenant of artillery, and spoke of the advantages that would accrue from the rescue of Ivan, and the delivering of him to the regiments of guards. While he thought to raise his consequence by assuming the air of a conspirator without accomplices, he however said nothing to Tschevarideff positively either of the time, or of the manner of executing his plot. He had already performed his week's duty in the fortress, without venturing an attempt. But, tormented by the anxieties arising from suspense, and condemning his own irresolution, he

asked permission to be continued on guard for one week longer. This extraordinary step seems not to have excited any suspicions in a governor, who was entrusted with so very important and critical a charge; and the request of Mirovitch was granted him without hesitation.

After having admitted into his confidence a man of the name of Jacob Pishkoff, he began at about ten o'clock on a fine summer's night, to fall into conversation with three corporals and two common soldiers; and after tampering with them some time, and obviating such difficulties as were suggested by their fears, they were soon gained over to his plan, and they promised to follow his orders. However, whether from timidity or from precaution, they resolved with one consent to wait till the night was farther advanced. Between the hours of one and two in the morning, they came together again. Mirovitch and the corporals then procured about fifty of the

soldiers who were on guard, to put themselves under arms, and thus prepared they marched towards the prison of Ivan.

On the way they met Berednikoff, the governor of the fortress, whom they thought securely locked in sleep. Roused by some noise, either made by them or accidentally occasioned, he rushed out to see what was the matter. He authoritatively demanded of Mirovitch the reason of his appearing in arms at the head of the soldiers. Without returning any answer, Mirovitch knocked him down with the butt end of his firelock, and, ordering some of his people to secure him, continued his march. Having wounded and secured the governor, Mirovitch lost no time to improve his advantage. Being arrived at the corridor into which the door of Ivan's chamber opened, he advanced furiously at the head of his troop, and attacked the handful of soldiers who guarded prince Ivan. He was received with spirit by the guard, who quickly repulsed him. He

immediately ordered his men to fire upon them, which they did. The centinels returned their fire; when these conspirators, at the same time the most desperate and the most timid of mankind, were obliged to retire, though neither on one side nor on the other, was there a single man killed, or even wounded in the slightest degree. The soldiers of Mirovitch, surprised at this unexpected resistance, showed signs of an inclination to retreat. Their chief withheld them; but they insisted on his showing them the order, which he said he had received from Petersburg. He directly drew from his pocket and read to them a forged decree of the senate, recalling prince Ivan to the throne, and excluding Catharine from it, because she was gone into Livonia to marry count Poniatofsky. The ignorant and credulous soldiers implicitly gave credit to the decree, and again put themselves in order to obey him. A piece of artillery was now brought from the ramparts to Mirovitch, who himself pointed

it at the door of the dungeon, and was preparing to batter the place; but at that instant, the door opened, and he entered unmolested with all his suite.

The officers Vlassief and Tschekin, commanders of the guard which was set over the prince, were shut up with him, and had called out to the centinels to fire. But on perceiving this formal preparation, and hearing Mirovitch give orders to beat in the door, they thought it expedient to take counsel together. And, first, they held it impossible to resist such a superiour force as that which they had lately beaten off. Then they took into consideration the dreadful consequences, which must inevitably ensue, to the public and the safety of the empire, if their prisoner should be enlarged; and lastly, they set before their eyes the punishment that would be inflicted on them by the government, in case their charge should be taken from them, though against their will, and after all possible resistance.—On this consulta-

tion, they came to the dreadful resolution of assassinating the unfortunate captive, over whose life they were to watch, unterrified with the dangers which manifestly awaited this horrid act, directly hanging over them from a desperate force, which, to give any colour to their proceeding, they must have concluded irresistible.

At the noise of the firing, Ivan had awoke; and, hearing the cries and the threats of his guards, he conjured them to spare his miserable life. Life, oppressed by the heaviest captivity, is still desirable. But, seeing that these barbarians had no regard to his prayers, he found new force in his despair; and, though naked, defended himself for a considerable time. Having his right hand pierced through, and his body covered with wounds, he seized the sword from one of the monsters and broke it; but while he was struggling to get the piece out of his hand, the other stabbed him from behind, and threw him down.

He who had his sword broke now plunged his bayonet into his body, and several times repeating his blow, under these strokes the unhappy prince expired.

They then opened the door, and showed Mirovitch at once the bleeding body of the murdered prince, and the order by which they were authorised to put him to death, if any attempt should be made to convey him away. Mirovitch, struck with horrour, at first started back some paces; then threw himself upon the body of Ivan, and cried out, "I have missed my aim; I have now nothing to do but to die."—But he presently rose up. So far from attempting to flee from the punishment, which he must now foresee, or to take his revenge on the two assassins by shooting them on the spot, he returned to the place where he had left the governour in the hands of his soldiers; and, surrendering to him his sword, coldly said, "It is I that am now your prisoner." The next day the body of the poor unfortunate Ivan

was exposed before the church in the castle of Schlusselburg, clothed in the habit of a sailor. As soon as it was known, immense crowds of people flocked thither from Petersburg, and from the neighbouring towns; and it is impossible to describe the grief and indignation, that were excited at the view of an unfortunate being, who, after having been cruelly precipitated from the throne while yet in his cradle, passed his days in a dark and doleful dungeon, where he was inhumanly put to death by assassins. Ivan was full six feet high, with fine flaxen hair, a red beard, regular features, and of a complexion extremely fair: accordingly, the beauty of his person and of his youth, for he had not yet completed his twenty-fourth year, heightened the sensibility that was universally discovered at the unhappiness of his lot, and the cruelty of his murderers. His body was wrapt up in a sheep-skin, and interred without ceremony.

The concourse and murmurs increased to such a degree, that a tumult was now apprehended. To avoid any fatal consequences, the two assassins, Vlassief and Tschekin, as soon as they had perpetrated their crime, put themselves on board of a vessel, which they found on the point of sailing for Denmark, where, on their arrival, the Russian minister took them under his protection. The governour of Schlusselburg dispatched to Petersburg a full relation of the horrid outrage of Mirovitch, and of the tragical end of Ivan. He accompanied this account with a manifesto, that had been found in the pocket of Mirovitch, and which, it was said, had been long fabricated in concert with lieutenant Uvchakoff. This manifesto, which contained many scurrilous invectives and imprecations against Catharine, and represented Ivan as the sole legitimate emperor, was to have been published, it was observed, at the moment the prince was set at liberty, and was making his entry into Petersburg. Count

Panin, the prime minister, immediately sent off a courier to the empress, with an exact account of the whole affair.

Her majesty was then at Riga; and, under a visible impatience of mind, was frequently inquiring after news from the residence: a matter by no means unaccountable, if we consider the frequent causes of alarm from plots and cabals, with which she had been incessantly harassed since the beginning of her reign. Her inquietude increased from day to day, and she would often rise in the night, to ask whether no courier were arrived. Some persons afterward recollected these circumstances to her disadvantage, as if she were anxiously counting the days since the period when Mirovitch was stationed on guard. Nor was it forgotten upon this occasion, that this officer had suffered his week's duty to expire, before he could summon up courage enough, to attempt the execution of his design.

At length, after three days had elapsed, the dispatches of Panin were brought to

her hand; and soon after she returned from the conquered provinces. On her entry into Petersburg, she was surrounded by an immense concourse of people, who endeavoured to find out by her countenance what was passing in her heart; but, always mistress of herself, the face of that princess was ever covered with smiles. Her step was as firm, her front as serene, as those who feel no inward reproaches usually are. A manifesto appeared by authority, giving an account of the whole procedure, filled with expressions of humanity and piety, which sort of language seemed now to be the official style of the Russian court.

Lieutenant-general Veymar had already been charged to repair to Schlusselburg. After having privately examined Mirovitch and his accomplices, they were brought to Petersburg, where their trial was opened before a commission composed of five prelates, of an equal number of senators, and several general officers. Mirovitch appeared before the

judges with all that tranquillity, which only the hope of pardon can communicate to criminals like him. It is true, that the judges themselves seemed not to make it a matter of great importance, and rather dreaded to fathom this execrable mystery. One alone, he was a senator, had sufficient sense of propriety, and honest hardihood, to declare against such an extraordinary mode of procedure. But he was blamed for his indiscreet zeal, and advised to keep silence, if he would not lose his office, and be degraded from his rank of noblesse. In fine, after some days spent in the trial, Mirovitch was condemned to lose his head,—not as guilty of high treason, but only as a disturber of the public peace;—Unmoved at this sentence, he walked to the scaffold like a man who had nothing to fear, and who thought himself sure of obtaining a pardon; as indeed, according to a report, it had been promised him. But if he really reckoned on a pardon, he was cruelly deceived. The time for his exe-

cution was accelerated; and the unhappy wretch, if he had before been the instrument, was now, probably, the victim of a barbarous policy. Those who considered him in the former point of view were astonished, that the empress should suffer him to fall under the axe.—But how could she have screened him from punishment, without manifestly drawing upon herself the charge of having prompted his crime? and if she were really concerned in it, can it be thought, that she would hesitate a moment in getting rid of a witness, who would have exposed her to continual vexation.

Mirovitch was the only person condemned to death. The soldiers, whom he had engaged to join him in the intended rescue, were subjected to other punishments, of various kinds, perhaps not less severe. Pishkoff, who was considered as the most guilty, was sentenced to run the gauntlet twelve times through a line of a thousand men. The three corporals, and the two fuziliers, seduced after Pish-

koff, were flogged ten times along the same line; after which they were put to the public works, with a log chained to their leg. The other soldiers, who acted under the orders of Mirovitch, were likewise whipped through the ranks; and, after being incorporated into other regiments, were sent into distant garrisons. Tschevarideff was degraded from his rank of officer, for having heard without revealing the vague confidential communications of Mirovitch. Fifty-eight persons were punished. A great appearance of severity was exercised against them; and this, among other circumstances, was calculated to obviate any suspicions, that might arise concerning any more eminent instigators of their crime.

But the public was not altogether satisfied with this parade of justice. Men were much divided in opinion concerning the whole of this transaction.—It was thought inconceivable, that an insignificant private individual should hazard an enterprise, which, if even at first all

things should go well, could never be prosecuted to final success by him. That in the attack no one should be hurt, that upon Ivan's death all should be immediately as quiet, as if nothing had happened; that no inquiry was instituted about any accomplices in Petersburg, of which there had been some talk at first, seemed to give room to surmise, that simply this death was the object in view, and to this sole end the whole machinery was directed. None of the court party could have done this service to the absent empress, without her knowledge and consent.—But on the other hand may be adduced the slanderous manifesto found upon Mirovitch, which he intended to have published immediately upon his having Ivan in his possession, and which count Panin, it was said, had actually read and sent to the sovereign; and, particularly, the execution of the rebel: if perhaps it were he, and not some unknown malefactor who underwent that punishment.—Let it suffice, that the pub-

lic emotions of pity and displeasure at the sad catastrophe of the imperial progeny, and himself once emperor, were plainly manifested by every kind of expression. The multitudes of people, who, in spite of all that could be done to check their impetuosity, still flocked to the castle, insisting on seeing the body, were so great, that the government was obliged to give orders to remove the corpse from the castle-church, and convey it, in the silence of the night, with the utmost secrecy, to the monastery of Tichfina, two hundred versts* from Petersburg. Among the regiments of guards in that city, who thought they had the exclusive right to depose and murder emperors, violent commotions arose; that especially in the night of the 24th of July, 1764, caused the greatest alarm: it was only by the prudent measure of prince Galitzin, who

* An English mile is two versts and eighty-six sajenes (fathoms).

caused powder and ball to be distributed publicly among the marching regiments, that were encamped in the vicinity of Petersburg, that tranquillity was restored. The two officers, by whom the prince was assassinated, were, in consideration of their good intentions to the quiet of the state, amply rewarded for their fidelity; but when they appeared at court, every one beheld them with looks of undissembled contempt and abhorrence.

This was a consequence both natural and just; and how could any one, who had not lost the generous feelings of humanity, cast an eye of complacency upon the perpetrators of so foul a crime?—There is something in the fate of this young prince, that must impress each feeling heart in every age.—A victim he fell to ambition not his own.—Raised without his own consent or knowledge to the sovereign power, how dearly did he pay for a few fleeting months of imposed authority, by lingering years of un-

just imprisonment and a cruel death, the crown of his persecution!—Brief is the tragedy of his mournful life; yet who can trace it from the cradle to the throne—to the dungeon—to the grave, without commiserating his lot?—even from his enemies he wrung the tear of pity.

But the scene is closed:—misery's haven is the grave; "there the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."—Rest, injured prince! rest in peace, until the dead shall arise to judgment.

In the mean time, shall we dare to impeach the justice of the ruler of the world? and will not every good man look anxiously forward to a day of general retribution? We know, that it is approaching. Now let indignation yield to pity. Content to refer the matter to the decision of infinite justice, let us derive this improvement from the woful story.—Whenever misfortune assails us, and something would tempt us to

repine; thinking upon the wretched Ivan, let us endure the iron rod of adversity with humble resignation, and encounter the inferiour evils of life with a smile.

THE END.

Printed by H. Bryer, Bridewell Hospital, Bridge Street.